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SPENCER'S BOSTON THEATRE.....No. LVII.

A N N E B L A K E.

A Play

IN FIVE ACTS.

BY

WESTLAND MARSTON,

AUTHOR OF THE PATRICIAN'S DAUGHTER, STRATHMORE, PHILIP OF
FRANCE AND MARIE DE MERANIE, GERALD, A DRAMATIC POEM,
HEART OF THE WORLD, AND BOROUGH POLITICS.

WITH ORIGINAL CASTS, COSTUMES, AND ALL THE
STAGE BUSINESS.

BOSTON:

WILLIAM V. SPENCER,
128 WASHINGTON STREET, (CORNER OF WATER.)

CAST OF CHARACTERS.

	<i>Princess Theatre, London, 1852.</i>	<i>Howard Atheneum, Boston, 1853.</i>	<i>Broadway, New York, 1853.</i>
SIR JOSHUA TOPPINGTON, (Baronet,)	Mr. Addison	Mr. E. B. Williams	Mr. D. Whiting
THOROLD, (lodging in Wales as an Artist,)	“ Charles Kean	“ W. R. Goodall	“ F. B. Conway
LLANISTON, (his Friend, a Gentleman of Fortune, Heir to a Peerage,)	“ Walter Lacy	“ D. Stewart	“ H. W. Bland
JILLOTT, (a Butler,)	“ J. Chester	“ R. Ryan	“ Henry
SERVANT,	“ Collis .....	.....	“ Vincent
LADY TOPPINGTON, (Wife of Sir Joshua,)	Mrs. Winstanley	Mrs. A. Knight	Mrs. Vernon
ANNE BLAKE, (a Dependant, Sir Joshua's Niece,)	“ Charles Kean	“ A. C. Mowatt	Mad. Ponisi
LLOYD, (a Housekeeper,)	“ Daly	“ Bradshaw	Mrs. Henry
DAVIES,	“ Saker .....	.....	.....
		<i>Museum, Boston, 1854.</i>	<i>Arch Street, Philadelphia, 1856.</i>
SIR JOSHUA TOPPINGTON, (Baronet,) .....	.....	Mr. C. S. Davis	Mr. Thayer
THOROLD, (lodging in Wales as an Artist,) .....	.....	{ “ F. B. Conway, and }	“ F. B. Conway
LLANISTON, (his Friend, a Gentleman of Fortune, Heir to a Peerage,) .....	.....	{ “ E. F. Keach	“ Dolman
JILLOTT, (a Butler,) .....	.....	{ “ J. Davies .....	.....
SERVANT, .....	.....	{ “ H. W. Finn .....	.....
LADY TOPPINGTON, (Wife of Sir Joshua,) .....	.....	{ “ Delano .....	.....
ANNE BLAKE, (a Dependant, Sir Joshua's Niece,) .....	.....	.....	.....
LLOYD, (a Housekeeper,) .....	.....	.....	.....
(2) DAVIES, .....	.....	.....	.....

SCENE.—North Wales. TIME.—The Present.

Costumes of the present day.

ANNE BLAKE.

ACT I.

SCENE. — *Hall in Toppington House, extending to the back of the stage, c. doors practical, backed by view of the distant country.*

Enter LLOYD and DAVIES, c. d.

Lloyd. Stir ! my young lady will be back at noon.
The wind cuts this spring morning. Quick, a fire !

Davies. For *her*, indeed ! Sir Joshua and my lady
Will not be home till six ; and for Miss Blake
There's your own fire. What serves the housekeeper
May do for *her* to warm by. Fire for *her* !

(She goes out, tossing her head disdainfully, R. H.)

Lloyd. Hard-hearted insolent —

Enter JILLOTT, R. H.

Dear Mr. Jillott,
The wine's out ; and Miss Blake will need a glass
After her long, cold ride.

Jil. Why, Mistress Lloyd !
Of your five senses is there one remains ?
Shall I — Sir Joshua's butler — make a journey
Down to the cellar ? open, as I must,
An untouched cask ? and bear the further labor
Of drawing and decanting, all for *her* ?
For Anne Blake ! Is that rational ?

Lloyd. I'd do it
For any creature living — for a beggar,
A sweep, a Hottentot !

Jil. Ah ! there we differ !

Lloyd. But, sir, for Miss Anne Blake, remember this :
She is your master's niece.

Jil. Sir Joshua,
I know, has the misfortune to be called
Her uncle.

Lloyd. (Incensed.) Why misfortune ?

Jil. Mistress Lloyd,

Be rational. You know Sir Joshua's sister,
 Who might have made a creditable match, --
 A match Sir Joshua prayed for, — sunk herself
 By marrying some poor devil — scribbler, clerk,
 Tutor, or — I forget the man ! What followed ?
 They'd not a coin or crust. She must have starved,
 But that Sir Joshua received her here,
 With her puling baby.

Lloyd. Ay, took child and mother,
 But not the husband.

Jil. No ; most properly
 The door was closed on him. What happened next ?
 His wife, — Sir Joshua's sister, — ere a year,
 Frets herself out of life, and leaves my master
 This squalling wench to —

Lloyd. Shame ! Poor innocent !

Jil. Poor vixen ! From a babe she couldn't bear
 Sir Joshua nor my lady. Why, she failed
 In common gratitude.

Lloyd. For what ? Harsh words
 And frowns from him, neglect from her, for taunts,
 Imprisonments, and blows of angry nurses,
 To cure her temper, till she half became
 The sullenness they called her. Yet a heart
 Opener to kindness beats not.

Jil. Poh, poh, poh !

Hearts are low things. I speak of *manners*, Lloyd ;
 And hers distress me. Yes, you did good service,
 When, while Miss Blake was at your husband's farm,
 You snared that strolling artist ~~for~~ a lodger,
 And gulled him into love — *love for Anne Blake* !
 I hope he'll take her, and so rid my taste
 Of what offends it, my poor lady's nerves
 Of daily shocks, my master of disgrace !

Lloyd. Disgrace ! Isn't she flesh and blood like them,
 And, though she's poor, their equal ?

Jil. Equal !

Lloyd. Ay !

Jil. Equal ! I'll hear no more. Such sentiments
 Strike at the root of order. O, you're dangerous,
 A leveller, Lloyd — a leveller ! I've no doubt
 You'd have the cow boy sit at table with us,
 And pledge us in *his pewter* ! Nay, no more.

(*He stalks out with great pomp*, R. H.

Lloyd. Why not their equal ? Our Sir Joshua's father,
 Though London alderman and baronet,
 Was yet a trader, nor in wealth forgot
 The means that raised him. There be two extremes
 Of men that one can bear — those born to station,
 Who take it graciously, and those who earn it ;
 But save me from those middle honorables

That have no root in custom, yet despise
 Their honest planter — labor ! Had Sir Joshua
 Been used to rank, or won it by his wits,
 He'd not have shown his niece such spite because
 Her mother married humbly. (*Knock.*) A knock ! not hers :
 There's too much flourish. Her knock's sharp and bold,
 As if the door, too, were her enemy —
 All but poor Lloyd !

Enter LLANISTON speaking to servant, who retires, C. D.

Llan. So, so, I'm out of luck ! Good day, good Lloyd !

Lloyd. Good day, sir.

Llan. And Sir Joshua —

Lloyd. Returns to-night, at six, sir, with my lady.

Llan. (*Abstractedly.*) Humph !

Lloyd. (*Aside.*) Now, I told him they'd be gone a week,
 And thrice within the week he comes to seek them.

Llan. I've called, you know, on business.

Lloyd. Will you wait ?

Llan. I've not a moment. (*Goes undecidedly towards the door, centre, then returns.*) Can I see Miss Blake ?

Lloyd. She's out, sir, for her ride.

Llan. Humph !

Lloyd. She'll be back, though,
 In an hour, or half an hour, or less.

Llan. I'll wait. (*Throws himself into porter's chair.*)

Lloyd. (*Aside.*) That's odd : he said just now he'd not a moment.
 How can she help his business ?

Llan. (*Starting as from a reverie.*) So he's dead ?
 Her father — Miss Blake's father ?

Lloyd. Sir, 'tis like.

He crossed the seas ere she could lisp his name.
 All trace of him is lost, as in the wave
 The furrow of his ship.

Llan. Poor girl !

Lloyd. Ah, sir !

Her life's had little sunshine, little soil ;
 But she's a hardy nature.

Llan. True.

Lloyd. She has

A spirit, sir.

Llan. I know it. I've heard her talk. (*Walks apart.*)

Spirit indeed ! Her very words are cuffs ;
 And yet I like them. They've a health that suits me ;
 Because well born and rich, forsooth, my life
 Has been all tame and breezeless. Gliding servants
 Have noiseless done my bidding ; tradespeople —
 Forgetting man's a perpendicular —
 Have crooked when I approached ; often even woman,
 Whose outside should be mirror to her heart,

Has feigned the glance, the motion, and the blush
 Heaven meant for instincts. O, all these have closed me
 In a dead, sultry noon ! but brave Anne Blake
 Blows like a morning gust from our cragged hills.
 I breast it, and am man !

Lloyd. Hark ! that's her pony.

(ANNE heard without, c. d.)

Anne. I say you must, for the beast's sake, not mine.
 She's hot. Walk her round gently. Sirrah do it !

Enter ANNE in a plain riding dress, c. d. She rushes up to LLOYD, and flings her arms round her neck.

Is it not shame now, Lloyd, that for *my* sake
 Dumb things should suffer ? Though poor Jenny smokes,
 The groom won't walk her round the yard ! Of course not :
 She's *mine* ! (With great bitterness.)

Lloyd. (Soothingly.) Hush, here's a gentleman to hear.

Anne. What then ?

Is my tongue to be jailed because he's ears ?

Llan. Rather because he hears, he'd have it free
 And speak unchecked.

Anne. Nay, *your* tongue forces
 Debts on me which my body pays. See, sir,
 Courtesies for compliments ! Good day. (Going, r. h.)

Llan. But —

Lloyd. (Who goes after her, apart.) Stay.
 He speaks you softly.

Anne. Softly ! So your lady
 Speaks to Sir Joshua, yet I've seen him writhe.
 Our courteous guests speak softly when they stoop
 To notice the dependent. Who has ever
 Spoken softly to me but to mock ? Save you —
 You, Lloyd, and — *him* !

Llan. She doesn't deign a look.

Anne. Well, has he come ? (Still apart to LLOYD.)

Lloyd. (Archly.) Who, sweetheart ?

Llan. (Aside.) This is civil, on my life.

(He turns on his heel and walks to c. d.)

Anne. Who ? Is there any name I'd waste the breath
 It needs to sound, but —

Lloyd. Thorold's — Edward Thorold's ! —
 No ; not yet come.

Anne. Absent again for weeks,
 And still he hides the cause. Nay, I'll not murmur.
 I've no more claim to his dear love than has
 The heather to the sun ; yet how I dashed
 Down crag, through wood, o'er plain, in hope to meet him !
 I'm in full time ; dependents should be patient.

Lloyd. Nay, nay, pet !

(ANNE goes out dejectedly, r. h., LLOYD accompanying and caressing her.)

Llan. So she's gone. The porter's chair
And I are left for company. (*Looking off.*) Here's one
To make a third. Why, if I've eyes, 'tis Thorold,
My hero friend from India, my rare compound
Of grave and gay, whom I perhaps more love
That I half fear him.

Enter THOROLD, C. D.

Thorold. Once more here. What! Llaniston!
Away from London, leaving all May-fair
Under eclipse!

Llan. What matters to a world
That lives by gas light? What took *you* from London
After your Indian triumphs, ere a maid
Had asked your autograph, or a fond mother
Secured you for a breakfast?

Thor. (*Smiling.*) Business, business.

Llan. Ay, true; I recollect.

Thor. But recollect
Most to forget — my name, my quality,
And chief, all points between us that affect
Sir Joshua.

Llan. I'm pledged.

Thor. You but see an artist
In quest of beauty.

Llan. Good! I'm on a quest
After the *grand*. Folks call the rugged *grand*:
I've found the rugged.

Thor. Snowdon?

Llan. No.

Thor. The Peak
Of Cader Idris? the Pont Aberglaslyn?

Llan. No; it's a *she* — a girl. D'ye know Anne Blake?

Thor. (*Starting, but quickly composing himself.*)
Anne Blake! Sir Joshua's niece?

Llan. The same. Don't laugh.
I'm that girl's slave; I've seen her thrice.

Thor. Does she
Encourage you? (*Carelessly.*)

Llan. Not she. She pelts my heart
With such force from her, it comes back again
In the rebound. I'll win her. Ah, you know not,
When women have well chased you all your life,
The zest of giving chase to one yourself!
I'll win her!

Thor. Will you *love* her? (*Laying his hand on LLANISTON'S arm.*)

Llan. By my life.

Thor. I doubt that. Women who are but pursued
For the pleasure of the chase are, like its victims,
Cast off when captured; and the huntsman lover
Turns to new game.

Llan. (*Taking off his hat.*) I thank your reverence.

Thor. A wife, my friend, should be

A sweet bird won

To one's breast by cherishing ; not a wild quarry

To be hawked down.

Llan. My five years senior,

I bow to your reproof. In truth, dear Thorold,

I own its justice. But don't balk this passion.

Thor. Miss Blake will. Were it otherwise, you'd tire
With your honeymoon no older than a crescent.

Llan. A challenge. I'll make ready for the lists ;

Soon shall my constancy unhorse your scorn,

While I cry *Victory, Wales, and sweet St. Anne !*

(*He goes out, c. d.*)

Thor. I could not tell him in this frolic mood

Her heart had chosen me, her friend, preceptor,

Met, as she thinks, by chance. Ah, now, dear orphan !

Not for thy father's memory art thou loved,

But for thyself. She guesses not my station,

Nor that I knew her father ; but her soul,

Which chill neglect had frozen, at one touch

Of kindness from me, thawed ; and, though the current

Foams at opposing wrong, its waves are clear

And bright with glints of heaven ! And now to see her.

(*Turning, he looks accidentally through window at side, and pauses.*)

Alas ! my eyes, that thirst so for that sight,

A while must wait ! Sir Joshua returns,

And I'd not meet her in *his* sight, whose taunts

My prudence scarcely brooks. Brave Anne, bear on, —

The day is near I shall have right to shield thee !

(*Exit, c. d.*)

Re-enter LLOYD and JILLOTT, r. h.

Lloyd. Not six yet by two hours, and here's Sir Joshua
And my lady back.

*Enter SIR JOSHUA and LADY TOPPINGTON, followed by SERVANT and
LADY'S MAID.*

Serv. (*Timidly approaching SIR JOSHUA.*) Your coat, Sir Joshua.

Sir Josh. Back, sir, — know your place.

Serv. Yes, sir.

Sir Josh. Why does the fool stand gaping there ?
Why don't you take my coat ?

Jil. (*To SERVANT, who hesitatingly touches the coat.*)
Not so, you country loon ; — so, there's your pattern.

(*Takes the coat from SIR JOSHUA with a low bow, and flings it at
servant.*)

Sir Josh. Wait, sir.

The cards.

Lady Top. A chair, Lloyd. My poor nerves !

Jil. The cards, Sir Joshua.

Sir Josh. Are these all?

Jil. All, sir.

Sir Josh. (*Glancing over the cards.*)

Dobbs, Evans, Jones, the curate, Andrew Ray,
From *Budge-row, City!* Stretch of insolence,
Because he knew my father! Roberts, Owen —
There's not a name worth reading in the batch.

(*Flings down the cards contemptuously.*)

No callers else?

Jil. Why, no, sir, none —
Except the Earl of Conniston — —

Sir Josh. Except

The Earl of Conniston! Dare you drag in
An earl's name, a real earl's name, at the tail
Of fifty nobodies, with an — except?
Well, well, Lord Conniston called — —

Jil. At the lodge gate, sir,
To ask the nearest cross road to Llanberis.

Sir Josh. Leave the room, sirrah. (*JILLOTT bows and goes out.*)

Lloyd. He forgot to say

Squire Llaniston, who's home from London, called.

Sir Josh. (*Troubled.*) Squire Llaniston!

Lady Top. (*Throwing back her bonnet, with an air of indifference.*)
Yes, she spoke plainly.

Lloyd. And he called three times.

Sir Josh. Three times within a week! Who spoke with him?

Lloyd. Myself, sir, and Miss Blake.

Sir Josh. (*Horrified.*) Miss Blake!

Lady Top. (*In a corroborating manner.*) Miss Blake.

Sir Josh. Send her here — no words.

Lloyd. (*Muttering.*) More spite at my poor pet. (*Goes out.*)

Sir Josh. Well, madam?

Lady Top. Well, Sir Joshua.

Sir Josh. You're calm

Upon the brink of ruin.

Lady Top. Ruin? (*Still calmly.*)

Sir Josh. Madam,

D'ye know, or not, that my estate is mortgaged
To Llaniston for thousands; that last year
He pressed for its redemption; that he's called
Thrice in this week, doubtless to urge repayment,
And that to meet his claim I've not its tithe.

Lady Top. You would keep hounds, give dinners, bet with lords.

Sir Josh. Zounds!

Lady Top. Mind my nerves.

Sir Josh. Nerves, ma'am! You've nerve enough
To warn your feet by a volcano! — Well,
The money was my own. I'd none with you!

Lady Top. No; but you'd family.

Sir Josh. What has it brought me?
I'm shunned by the whole county.

Lady Top. Dear Sir Joshua,
Is that my fault? You married and gained entrance
To the first circles; — I accomplished that.
They cut you; — you accomplished that yourself.

Sir Josh. “I’m spited every way; here’s Llaniston
“Calls thrice and sees Anne Blake. It’s ten to one
“She’s sent him back affronted. O, she’s here!”

(ANNE enters with an air of stolid dejection, R. H.)

Anne. You sent for me.

Sir Josh. Yes.

Anne. Well, sir?

Sir Josh. That’s your welcome
After my absence, is it? (A pause.)

Lady Top. (Sarcastically.) Can’t you say
You’re glad to see Sir Joshua?

Anne. Must I say
What I know false?

Sir Josh. You’re too like your low father
To be grateful. Would my house were quit of you.

Anne. It will be soon.

Sir Josh. Yes, when yon strolling sketcher
Makes you his wife. Why leaves he still unfixed
Your marriage day? He had my full consent
To take you hence. The dolt most like repents
His hasty bargain.

(ANNE shudders and utters an ejaculation of sudden pain.)

Lady Top. Nay, you use her hardly.

Sir Josh. Let her not chafe me, then. Speak, Anne! you’ve seen
Young Llaniston thrice?

Anne. The fault was his.

Sir Josh. What errand had he?

Anne. A fool’s! — He wasted compliments on me.

Sir Josh. What was his business?

Anne. I can’t tell;

I wouldn’t hear it.

Sir Josh. Why, you never turned him
Out of the room!

Anne. No; I got tired and left it.

Sir Josh. (Enraged.) She turned her back on him! He left
insulted,

Enraged beyond a doubt, and for revenge
He’ll claim his mortgage promptly!

(To ANNE.) ‘Tis your work,
Yours who live by my sufferance, whose least crust
Is given!

Anne. Earned, sir, — not given; it’s but the price you pay
To taunt the helpless. That safe luxury,
Like others, must be paid for.

Sir Josh. Minx!

Anne. (With a burst of uncontrollable passion.) Be sure
You shall not lose; there’s one shall pay you back

Each crumb you dropped me ; or, if not, I'd put
My 'blood, brain, bones to hire — nay, coin you guineas
Out of my life, rather than keep it bound
To charity like yours.

(*She rushes out, R. H.*)

Sir Josh. I'll tame you !

Lady Top. Who —
Who would have nerves ?

Enter JILLOTT, C. D.

Jil. Sir Joshua, a letter —
I may say a despatch. Squire Llaniston's groom
Brought it post haste.

Sir Josh. Out, blockhead ! (*Exit JILLOTT, R. H.*) As I said !
Here's the warrant of our doom. He asks his loans,
And I'm a beggar — you too ! (*He laughs sarcastically, then opens
the letter.*) Have I eyes ? . . .
There's no hoax, 'tis his hand. . . . Jove ! how I hate her !

Yet she must save me.

Lady Top. What's your news, Sir Joshua ?
Do you go to jail ?

Sir Josh. (*Jocularly.*) No, ma'am ; 'tis Llaniston
Should be confined for life.

Lady Top. For what crime ?

Sir Josh. Madness !
But it makes well for us. He'll not press now
To have his loans repaid. — The fool's in love,
In love, in downright love ! —

Lady Top. With whom ?

Sir Josh. Anne Blake !

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.

SCENE. — *Library in Toppington House, overlooking the grounds.*

SIR JOSHUA discovered on L. H.

Sir Josh. Yes, yes, I thank my stars ; but that I grudge
The vixen so much luck, this chance falls bravely.
Llaniston in love with her ! A pedigree
Old as the hills, and as much gold as, melted,
Would make a lake between them ! Llaniston
Nephew-in-law to me ! He can't press hardly
Upon his uncle. He'll extend his mortgage,
Perhaps forgive it. I can breathe — I'm saved !

Lady Top. (Who has entered unobserved, on the opposite side, R. H.) You're in high spirits.

Sir Josh. Have you seen her yet ? Have you told her this good news ! Does she keep her senses At such an offer ? Has she yet dismissed That rambling artist ? Zounds ! How dare he venture To woo my niece ?

Lady Top. She has not dismissed him ; She knows not Llaniston's offer.

Sir Josh. Quick, then, tell her.

Lady Top. Haste would mar all. She's a girl's love for Thorold. He showed her kindness. What accomplishments She knows, he taught her. Though she may be brought To banish him, gold will not tempt her.

Sir Josh. Then, What will ?

Lady Top. Her proud and jealous heart, which, to say truth, Has known so little love, she almost doubts Its presence when it comes. A word, a look, Which happier beings would not mark, in her Wake quick distrust. She's stung by Thorold's absence. That he too treats her as the poor dependant She half suspects already.

Sir Josh. Will you urge her To his rejection ?

Lady Top. Yes ; for love's a dream One touch dispels, while wealth and good position Last for a life ; also, because you're ruined, Save we've a hold on Llaniston.

Sir Josh. (Advancing to her.) Thanks.

Lady Top. (Withdrawing.) No transports ; They try my nerves. Both sides being duly weighed, I'd rather live in ease and bear your presence, Than starve with you in jail.

Sir Josh. (Angrily.) How ?

Lady Top. Silence !

Or I'll not aid you. (Motions him off.)

Sir Josh. (Deprecatingly.) Nay, we part good friends.

Lady Top. Best friends, sir, when we part. A pleasant morning.

(She courtesies, SIR JOSHUA bows and goes out, L. H.) Gold is not every thing. It's pleasant too To respect the man one marries. Once indeed I was love's dupe, like Anne, and half betrothed To a poor advocate. She'll have a lot Brighter than mine — rank, wealth, and — no Sir Joshua ! (Exit, L. H.)

Enter ANNE, attired in a fashionable morning dress, followed by LLOYD, R. H.

Anne. What means this change ? I know it's outside fair, But yet 'tis false. I feel it ! This fair garment,

Worn at my uncle's cost, hangs on my limbs
Heavier than chains. I'll cast it off —

Lloyd. Child, child,
Be not so mad ! Look in the glass and see
How it becomes you, beauty !

Anne. (Apart.) Where is he
Should guide me here ? Why this protracted absence —
The cause still hid in mystery ? Thorold, Thorold !
Have you, too, learned to stint the dues of love
When a dependant claims them ?

Enter LADY TOPPINGTON, L. H.

Lady Top. Go, Lloyd. (LLOYD goes out, L. H. ; LADY TOPPINGTON sinking indolently into a chair, while ANNE paces the room excitedly.)

You're disturbed ?

Anne. (Stopping short.) Madam, explain this riddle. Why am I Invited to your presence ? Whence these gifts Lavished unasked ?

Lady Top. If they displease you, choose Some other pattern. You've decidedly A graceful figure.

Anne. (Impatiently.) Madam !

Lady Top. Stay — sit down — You know I'm nervous. That's a charming foot !

Anne. Nay, then I'll go. (She half rises, but is restrained by a gesture from LADY TOPPINGTON.) Would you indeed be bounteous, Send back these toys, (her bracelets,) and give the poor their price. Lloyd has a nephew, a brave fisher lad, Who wants a boat.

Lady Top. (With musing admiration.) So generous ! I've oft thought

We were mistaken in you. Not an hour since I said, *She has a heart — a heart, Sir Joshua, — Whose love we might have won.*

Anne. Perhaps you might.

Lady Top. Your uncle and myself, I own, disliked you. Yet there are times when every woman's breast Yearns to its neighbor. Yes, dear Anne, I saw What you had suffered.

Anne. How ?

Lady Top. From Thorold's absence. Have I struck too roughly

A string that jars ? Don't speak —

Anne. For once — once only.

I love him, and could scarce debate his truth

With my own heart. How should I then with you ?

Lady Top. His truth ! You run to extremes. He's pledged to wed you,

And I don't doubt his honor.

Anne. Do you mean
That only *honor* binds him ?

Lady Top. There, you pain me !

Anne. That he repents his choice ?

Lady Top. Alas ! some men
Are so impulsive. One brief moonlike fancy
Abstracts high tides of passion, and sheds light
On its full sea. But soon breaks prosy day ;
Romance, their moon, dies out, and their hearts' ocean —
Last night too deep to sound — creeps back and leaves
Sand, weeds, and froth behind.

Anne. (To herself.) And *wrecks, wrecks* !

Lady Top. Love should be blind, no doubt ; but friendship,
watchful.

In proof of mine take this. Some weeks ago
I found here the dropped fragment of a letter,
Without direction. Deeming it my own,
I read by chance its opening lines. They bore
Such words of passionate tenderness as women
Breathe but to those they love !

Anne. Well !

Lady Top. Thorold entered,
And claimed it eagerly.

Anne. Well !

Lady Top. It *proves* nothing.

Anne. That he'd a friend who prized him ; nothing more.
(Aside.) And yet 'tis strange.

Lady Top. Nay, we'll not doubt then
That Thorold means you fairly.

Anne. Fairly ! Ay,

He'll keep his bond, you think, but curse the whim
That signed it ; — has no coin to pay that store
Of sumless love he vowed ; but O, he's honorable,
And ready with the forfeit ! I could blush
At my own jest. Such love suits, — nay, such *law* suits ! —
The bachelor a bankrupt, and the maid
His creditor, — conscience the officer she fees
To arrest her victim, and her heart his jail ! (With constrained
laughter.)

Lady Top. I'd give the world to have your spirits. — Ah,
Thorold's returned : you've seen him ?

Anne. No.

Lady Top. He's written ?

Anne. Once.

Lady Top. When, did you say ?

Anne. Last week.

Lady Top. He named
The day for his return ?

Anne. No.

Lady Top. Or explained
Why he delayed ?

Anne. (Curtly.) He bade me not inquire.

Lady Top. He bade you not inquire!

Anne. I wronged his trust

To say so much.

Lady Top. Confiding girl! You were to wed in May.

Is that so still?

Anne. No, not in May.

Lady Top. In June?

Anne. I know not yet.

Lady Top. He leaves you ignorant

On points like these! Her jealous soul has caught

The spark. There'll soon be flame.—(Aloud.) I'm silent; but

When next he treats you as your aunt's dependant,

Tell him she bids him rank you as her friend.

Enter JILLOT, L. H.

Jil. The honorable Mr. Llaniston, of Llaniston,

Through me entreats an audience of my lady. (Goes out.)

Lady Top. (Aside.) I've paved his way: himself must do the rest.

(She looks earnestly at ANNE, who sits absorbed, then goes out, R. H.)

Anne. (After a pause.) When next he treats you as your aunt's pendant!

Those were her careless words. Is it so? Of late

He has been often absent, and he checks

My questions of the cause. He'll sometimes chide them

As I were but his pupil. I must learn

Restraint and patience, and he'll give me kindness—

Allot me half his thoughts—then comes a bar.

Here your love's free to walk: that chamber's private.

A duteous wife's content, no doubt! For me,

I'm not that wife! (Rising.) No. Were his heart world-wide,

I'd be its sun or nothing—fill my world,

Or burst from it to ashes! What wild wrong

Is this to Thorold? he who taught me first

Man's nobleness, so good, so just!—ay, there,

So just! Does justice bind him to those vows

A moment's pity breathed, and his heart shrinks from?

Thor. (Without, L. H.) Anne! Anne! (He enters.) At last!

Anne. Thorold! (She rushes towards him, then suddenly checks herself.) So you're returned?

Thor. What! for no warmer welcome? (Kissing her.)

Anne. (Turning away.) Nay, you talk

As you'd been years away—not three short weeks.

Thor. Did they seem short?

Anne. To you.

Thor. Why, Anne?

Anne. (Carelessly.) Because

You're often absent. What one often does

'Tis plain one likes; and what one likes seems short.

Thor. Excellent logic. Then because you've borne
My absence often, it seemed short to you.

Anne. 'Twas forced on me.

Thor. 'Twas forced on *me*.

Anne. Explain it.

Thor. My absence? Thrice you've asked me that before.
Thrice I replied, I cannot.

Anne. Then my right—

The right of your betrothed to know your thoughts—
Must crouch to your high will.

Thor. No, Anne; your love
Must trust my will. I grant 'twixt maid and lover
Should be no secrets save what reason claims
And conscience warrants. If by these compelled
To veil his thoughts —

Anne. Ay — then?

Thor. Then 'tis *her* part
To credit the compulsion. She will think
Who led her steps in daylight, smoothed her way
When rough or thorny, was her shield in peril,
In weariness her staff; and when the night
Sinks on her path, she'll cling to him, and feel
No star above her head more clear and steadfast.

(*After a short pause she gives him her hand.*)
I knew you'd give your hand.

Anne. (*Aside.*) He knew I'd give it!
He moulds me just like wax: all calm, no passion!
If he loved me, he'd be angry. (*Withdraws her hand.*)

Thor. What! Not pardoned?

Anne. Pardoned — by *me*, an outcast, a stray waif
On fortune's tide, without an owner's name,
Or stamped with one I scorn!

Thor. Whose?

Anne. Whose but his
Who lured my mother from her home, made want,
That cankered life; her lot — dependence mine,
Who forced on me the life he left to insult?
My father's —

Thor. (*With sudden energy.*) Hold! A stigma, though deserved,
When a child brands it, makes the hearer weigh
The censure with the sin; but, if unjust —
No, no; you could not mean it!

Anne. Say I did,
What warrant cites me to *your* bar?

Thor. That instinct
Which makes the honored memory of the dead
A trust with all the living. What has warped
Your heart so from its course?

Anne. The words of all men
Who knew my father. He lacked strength to scale
My mother's height — so drew her to abasement.

Thor. Did *she* so deem? True, he was of a band
 Whom fortune frowns on, whom authority
 Oft uses and forgets; but, still, their souls
 Are the world's life blood!

Anne. Who?

Thor. THE MEN WHO THINK?

Whose weapon is the pen, whose realm the mind.
 I mean not laurelled bards, but daily workers,
 Who, like the electric force, *unseen* pervade
 The sphere they quicken; nameless till they die,
 And leaving no memorial but a world
 Made better by their lives!

Anne. You knew my father?

Thor. We met abroad; 'twas in his later years;
 I heard his story there. Your mother held
 His love above the world, and, spite of menace,
 Gave him her hand and heart. His thrifty earnings
 Sufficed till fever seized him. Then, on both
 Fell that sharp want: his wife mourned for *his* sake,
 With which his child upbraids him!

Anne. (Aside.) Plain he hates me!
 Never would love on one brief, bitter mood
 Pronounce so sternly! I've at least this grace,
 That, heartless as I am, I free your sight
 Of what must needs offend it! (Rushes out by window in flat.)

Thor. Stay, Anne! Gone!
 My love for her lost father made me harsh.
 I should have thought how much that secrecy
 His dying wish enforced, must try a nature
 Ardent and galled by wrong. To-day! when much
 I purposed to reveal, and had at hand
 The spells to soothe her, (producing a miniature and locket;) here her
 mother's face
 In its fresh youth; ay, here the locks that flung
 New grace on grace they hid; here, too, the words
 Her father wrote, and which, when worn by time,
 I then transcribed to save them.
 (Looking at the endorsed paper envelope from which he has taken the
 locket.)

Enter LADY TOPPINGTON by window in flat. Seeing THOROLD, she stops
 short; he takes the portrait.

Angel sweetness!
 Unlike thy child in feature, yet when love
 Has lit her mien, I've seen that very look! (Pressing his lips to min-
 iature.)
 I'll bring her back;
 And those mild eyes she ne'er beheld till now
 Shall win me her forgiveness. Anne!

(He leaves miniature, locket, and envelope on table, and goes out by window in flat, LADY TOPPINGTON standing aside unperceived.)

Lady Top. (Advancing.) I wonder
How angels look ! I heard that word ; besides,
There's no mistaking kisses. (Taking miniature.) Ah, the face !
Not Anne's. Whose then ? A rival's ? That, indeed,
Were opportune ! Methinks I've seen a face
Which this recalls. Where ? Where ? 'Tis fancy.
What's here ? A locket and it's envelope
Endorsed by Thorold ! So, (reads,) *Token from one*
More dear than life. Indeed !

(ANNE re-enters hastily by door, R. H.)

Anne. Forgive me, Thorold :
I was unjust — you, madam ?

Lady Top. Don't decide :
You were unjust too soon. D'ye know that face ? (Shows miniature.)

Anne. No.

Lady Top. 'Tis a fair one, though.

Anne. Most fair.

Lady Top. With eyes that melt the heart, with lips that woo such
kisses

As Thorold pressed there.

Anne. Thorold !

Lady Top. Ay, but now
Entering by chance and unobserved, I saw it ;
Nay, caught his words of passion. He has no sister ?

Anne. None.

Lady Top. Whose the portrait then ?

Anne. Ay, whose ?

Lady Top. Poor girl !
Too plain his motive for reserve and absence.
Do you now read the mystery of that letter
He dropped by chance ? Hers was the pen that signed it. (Pointing
to miniature.)

Your rival's, your triumphant rival's !

Anne. Ah,

No ! You're his enemy.

Lady Top. (Handing her the envelope.) Whose is that hand ?

Anne. Thorold's ! (Reads.) *Token from one more dear — more*
dear — (She falters.)

Lady Top. *More dear than life.*

(ANNE drops paper, and stands motionless.)

The paper wrapped this locket. See,
The golden hair within's the same that waves
Across that pictured brow. (Shows both.)

Anne. Room ! My brain swims !

(LADY TOPPINGTON replaces locket, paper, and miniature, and supports
ANNE.)

I thank you. I can walk. It was his hand !

(She reels towards the door, and falls.)

ACT III.

SCENE. — *A richly furnished Drawing Room in Toppington House.*

Anne. (Discovered seated on a low stool, her arm supporting her head.)

He loves another — *loves another!* Why,
I dwell upon the sounds as repetition
Could exorcise their sense. My heart rebels
Against my eyes. Have I not seen the face,
The painted face, which glowed 'neath warmer kisses
Than pressed my living lips? Have I not heard
Those words — *Token from one more dear than life?*
'Tis true, dupe, true! As drowning men recall
Old dreams of shipwreck, and in horror's face
Gasp, — *this is sleep*, — I cling to hope till billows
Of proof o'erwhelm me! Yes, he loves another!
'Tis best to meet truth calmly. This explains
His frequent absence, mystery, reproofs;
And for his vows to me I stand a debtor
To jealous pique or pity. Am I then
So base as to accept them, or so weak
That he who feels not richer for my love
Should see the loss of his has left me beggared? (*Springing to her feet.*)
Pride's a good robe; I famish; but I wear
No rags!

Enter LADY TOPPINGTON and LLANISTON, R. H.

Lady Top. My will's imperious; so submit
At once to be our guest. (*Linking her arm in ANNE's.*)
Join with me, love!
He can't refuse two ladies.

Llan. (*Who bows, aside.*) Who's the second?
Sure not Miss Blake. She met me at the door,
And deigned me as much notice as the threshold.

Lady Top. Silence consents. You'll stay; and to insure
Some life in these dull quarters, and reward
Your prompt obedience, hear what I propose —
We'll act a play —

Llan. Charming!

Lady Top. If we can call
A company together. Once we played
The Story of a Duchess. Here's the book.
I have at hand the dresses, parts, costumes.
Amuse each other till I bring them.
(*Apart to ANNE, who turns away, and fixes her eyes intently on a marble group.*)

Anne!

Be kind to him. He loves you, and has made you
An honorable tender of his hand. (*She goes to a cabinet.*)

Llan. (Aside.) She turns from me. Our hostess, gentle lady, bade me amuse you.

Anne. She imposed on you
A hard employment.

Llan. True. I'd choose another

Anne. Do so.

Llan. I'd woo you.

Anne. Then, sir, you'd succeed
In your first task — my amusement. (She retires up the stage, L.H.)

Llan. Well, jest on.

Let me but plead. (Follows her.)

Enter THOROLD, the miniature in his hand, L. H.

Thor. I've sought her every where. —

(Aside.) What! her aunt here!

And Llaniston! I must choose a fitter time
For this dear gift — the all that earth retains
Of her loved mother.

Lady Top. (Coming to front with robes, a coronet, and MSS., she observes THOROLD, lays them down, then speaks aside.)

Thorold here! There's danger

That must be met; for, spite of all, I think
He has not ceased to love her. Ah! what spell
Rivets his eye! That portrait! Anne!

(ANNE and LLANISTON come forward.)

Llan. Unkind

And sudden interruption! (THOROLD advances.)

Lady Top. What! You know him?

Llan. (Hesitatingly.) Yes. He calls himself an artist.

Lady Top. Nay, is one. — (To THOROLD.) That's a portrait.
May I look?

Your pencil's latest, doubtless.

Thor. (Reluctantly.) Madam!

Lady Top. Why,
You seem reluctant — quite perplexed. Ah! talent's
So modest! I insist. (She takes the portrait, and, turning to ANNE,
apart, opens the case.) The very likeness!

Look, a fair face, love! (Gives her the portrait, then aside.) Saw you
his confusion?

(ANNE supports herself by table; they affect to examine portrait.)

Llan. (To THOROLD.) Deuse take me if I understand your mystery!

Thor. At least respect it. Not a word, be sure,
Of aught between us that concerns Sir Joshua!

Llan. O, he's your object. Mine's his niece. Remember,
You challenged me to win her!

Thor. Have you won her?

Llan. Not yet; she's flint; but I'll strike fire from her.

Thor. The spark will scorch you: she'll remain a stone.

Lady Top. (Returning portrait to THOROLD.) A face that's full of interest: we both thought so.

(*Apart to ANNE.*) Look how he turns and lays it next his heart! Courage: he'll see you tremble.

Anne. I don't tremble.—

(*Aloud.*) Come, come, the talk dies out: one's thoughts grow numb. Who'll stir the mirth into a blaze? Will you?

Llan. Gladly! (Bringing THOROLD to LADY TOPPINGTON.)

Lady Commander, a recruit

For your company, not of dragoons, but players.

Lady Top. Ay, true, our dear theatricals! All's ready. (Showing separate MSS.)

Here's each one's separate part. Group round and listen, While I explain.— (*Aside.*) I'll turn this to account. (All walk to places.)

Our heroine's a young girl whose mind and beauty

Raise her from life's low level to a dukedom.

The duke who weds her is, of course, the hero.

Llan. I'll be the duke!

Anne. (Forcing gayety.) Beware, sir, your stage-lovers Have oft sad endings.

Llan. Yes; sometimes they die.

It's worth the risk of dying for to woo you.

Anne. (With laughter.) Ah, that's because you're vain, and don't believe

I'd suffer you to die!

Lady Top. A sharp retort!

Llan. (*Apart to THOROLD.*) Did you mark that? What think you of her now?

Thor. Think? That she's in good spirits.

Llan. Nay, she melts.

Look on, and see me win her.

Lady Top. (Resuming.) You're the duke, then, And Anne your duchess.

(Gives each of them a manuscript character.)

Llan. I'll play my part to the life. Ah, would 'twere for life!

Anne. Life's a long time. Let's see you play the lover For half an hour first.— (*Aside, glancing at THOROLD.*)

He's calm. My caprices

Disturb him little.

Llan. Come, begin. But Thorold —

Lady Top. O, I and Mr. Thorold take small share. The humble lover, he who, as he ought,

Resigns the maid, withdraws his flickering light

When greatness breaks upon her path like day.

I'm but his sister, who advises him

To that just course.

Llan. Begin, then. First, let's try

A scattered speech or two to test our powers.

Say this where the duke enters. (He leads ANNE forward.) That's the page.

Permit me.

Lady Top. (To THOROLD.) With what spirit they adopt
This project. (THOROLD takes the book.)

Llan. Ready. (Reads from the MS.) Scene — a rustic cottage.
Enter the duke. — Alone, my Marguerite ?
You turn surprised there.

Anne. Right ! (Reads from MS.) My Lord again
Beneath this humble roof ! Direct your feet
To loftier homes, for your high state more meet.

Llan. 'Tis inner worth gives rank to outward place ;
The cot's a court, if filled with human grace.
The rudest niche is hallowed, if it hold
A saint within ; and men who delve for gold
In the mean earth rise princes. Let me be
More rich than they — to stoop and rise — with THEE !

Anne. Thrice have you urged on me this suit before,
And thrice have I refused.

Llan. I'll urge the more !
Be rock, and my strong sea of love divide,
It ebbs but to return a mightier tide ;
Repelled again, more high the billows roll,
And sweep at last, resistless, to their goal !
Maiden ! I claim this hand !

(He kneels, and kisses her hand. LADY TOPPINGTON applauds.)

Thor. (Interposing between LLANISTON and ANNE.) Stay, Llan-
iston ; that's not the stage direction.
He doesn't kneel and kiss her in the book. (Shows the page.)

Llan. I did it upon instinct. (Rises.)

Anne. (To LADY TOPPINGTON.) Is he jealous ?

Lady Top. Jealous, with that cold eye ! No ; but he's proud,
Nor brooks another's homage to his bride.
I'll sound him, though. Converse with Llaniston.

(ANNE and LLANISTON retire.)

(To THOROLD.) I see this pains you.

Thor. What ?

Lady Top. Nay, if your eyes
Are closed, my lips are. (Looking towards ANNE and LLANISTON.)

Thor. Yes, you're right. I'm pained
For Llaniston, who may build delusive hopes
On her gay humor. I've no fears for her.

Lady Top. You're so confiding. Birth and wealth like Llanis-
ton's

Are strong temptations.

Thor. Not to Anne.

Anne. (Who laughingly releases her hand from LLANISTON, and
comes with him to front.) Nay, nay ;
To your task !

Llan. A cruel task to feign —
Only to feign I love you. You had driven
The play duke to despair.

Anne. (Recklessly.) He was repulsed
Three times, you know ! 'Tis you would have lost patience !
(Crosses the stage excitedly.)

Lady Top. That's a fair challenge.

Llan. So I count it.

Thor. (*Apart to ANNE.*) Anne,
A word. This frolic mood gives Llaniston warrant
For hopes you little dream of.

Anne. Are you sure
That I don't guess them.

Thor. I should grieve you did.
I would not think you jest with him.

Anne. Jest with him!

I jested once; but 'twas before I knew
His high condition. He's the nephew, sir,
And next heir of an earl. The man can give
His wife a coronet. Jest with him! Jest! —
(*Aside.*) He thought me heartless: now he'll find me so.
Come, friends, the play!

Thor. (*Apart.*) Have I heard right? What! Anne
Barter her childlike truth and plighted faith
For rank — for gold. 'Twas wanton humor; yet
This morning's freezing welcome her aunt's warning —
I'll end this doubt.

Anne. Proceed!

Llan. 'Tis Thorold's turn
To play the lover.

Thor. Ay, the humbler one,
Who yields her to the duke. Not till he knows
Her heart is with the duke, though. Here's a passage
Strikes me. I know the words. —

(*He lays down the book, and advances to ANNE, who stands apart.*)
Go: I release you! She can nought impart,
Who, giving all beside, withholds her heart.
Did those eyes smile I should recall they smiled
On loftier love, and deem my own beguiled.
Discord to me the tones, though soft and clear,
That make like music in a rival's ear.
I gave thee all my heart; as on a throne
Thou there hadst reigned, if reigning there ALONE!
But she whom from my breast capricious will
Or pride can tempt, that throne shall never fill!

Llan. Excellent! you quite make the part your own.

(*He is about to come forward. LADY TOPPINGTON restrains him, exhibiting robes and coronet.*)

Thor. (*Apart to ANNE.*) I felt as 'twere my own. Anne, I had
acted

Even as that lover.

Anne. A threat!

Thor. No; a warning.

If that ambition or caprice have swayed
Your heart to Llaniston, your fate were wretched
To call me husband; but if, from vanity,
With no intent to wed him, you would rouse

A true heart's hope and love, his fate were sadder
Who called you — wife.

Anne. (Aside.) O, prompt excuse to snap
The chain that galls him.

Thor. Hear me —

Anne. No ; I've chosen.

Here, sir, our pathways part ; you're free forever !

(Turning to LADY TOPPINGTON.) What have you there ?

Lady Top. The duchess' robe and crown.

Thor. (Apart.) This change should be the work of years, not
moments.

She false ! she heartless !

Enter SIR JOSHUA with a sealed letter, L. H.

Sir Josh. It's absurd ;
It's too absurd.

Lady Top. What now ?

Sir Josh. A messenger,
Who swears that Colonel Thorold's in the house,
And claims admittance.

Lady Top. Well !

Sir Josh. He brought this letter,
Just reached from India.

Thor. India ! Give it me.

Sir Josh. 'Tis not for you nor yours. Though you're called Thorold,
I judge you're no relation to the colonel.

Thor. No, sir ; I am the colonel. Llaniston ?

Llan. 'Tis true, indeed ; you speak with Colonel Thorold,
The gallant hero of our last campaign.

Thor. Give me your pardon. (Takes and opens letter.)

Sir Josh. Is it possible ?

Llan. Ay, sir, — a man of wealth and family
That few can boast.

Sir Josh. A downright gentleman.

I thought he lived by his talents.

Thor. (Reading apart.) "The Indian Mines." * * *
'Tis news indeed. Friend, give me joy ! Those mines
In India, where I'd risks —

Llan. Which you thought desperate —

Thor. Prosper past hope. They've hit on a new vein !

Llan. Brave tidings ! (Shakes THOROLD by the hand.)

Thor. (Resuming the letter.) Ah ! what's here ? Wait your re-
turn ! * * *

My return ! Then I'll be prompt. I'll save her, snatch her
From this corrupting air. Sir Joshua,
One title you've allowed. I claim another —
Your niece's guardian by her father's will.
I'll bring full proofs with reasons that till now
Obliged concealment. Hold the lady henceforth
At my disposal. (Goes to door.)

Sir Josh. What? Her guardian! Poh!
Her guardian! stay, stay — (Follows THOROLD out.)

Lady Top. (To LLANISTON.) Learn if this be true;
She's much moved. Go! (LLANISTON goes out.)

Anne. (Musing.) So his fate were sad
Who called me wife! He said it! Thorold!

Lady Top. (Playfully laying her hand on ANNE's shoulder.)
'Mazed!

Well, so you should be. A rich, high-born guardian
Dropped from the clouds! I suppose now you'll wed him?

Anne. For his wealth, when I dismissed him poor?

Lady Top. Dismissed him!
Well, then, 'twould look, I grant, should you relent,
As if his fortunes bribed you.

Anne. I'd let despair
Gnaw through my heart first.

Lady Top. Right! that's spirit, girl!
I love those flashing eyes. Stand so and humor
A fancy that I have. They're but the robes
Of the play duchess — (disposing them round her) —
Wait the coronet! (Places it on the table at ANNE's right.)
A perfect picture! You were born to rule,
To shine amidst the brilliant! Ah, there's one —
Heir to an earldom he — who sues to give
No mock robes to my Anne, "who'd bind her brows
"With their fit emblem, rank," — who'd not repent
His vow to a dependant!

Anne. Ah!

Lady Top. Whose pride
Would be to watch her triumphs.

Anne. (Suddenly.) 'Midst those triumphs
Should I again meet —

Lady Top. Thorold? Yes!

Anne. (As to herself.) He'd feel
I lost him and could live — no sickly flower
Nipped by his frost; but the plumed tree that shoots
From the scarred rock and nods at desolation!

(She pauses with sudden calmness, then drops the robe at her feet.)
Off, off, mock shows! I grasp realities. —

Heart that has ne'er been loved, whose love was scorned,
Freeze till that weakness perish, — freeze, but shine!
Who thinks, when glaciers flash, 'tis only ice
That glitters in the beam? (She stands lost in thought.)

Lady Top. (Who has retired a few steps, intently watching her, now
approaches.) Anne!

Anne. Ah! — Your hand!
We should be friends. — I'll marry Llaniston!

ACT IV.

SCENE. — *Drawing Room, as in Act III.**Enter THOROLD and LLANISTON, R. H.*

Thor. Nay, friend ! a truce to jesting. You, indeed, Propose to marry her.

Llan. Asked like a guardian ! *Do you indeed propose ?* To think, now, Thorold, You should turn out her guardian. Yes, we marry, That is, with your consent, if she decides so.

Thor. Then she yet doubts ?

Llan. She bids me wait her answer Soon in the library. (*Looking at his watch.*) Cupid and Hymen, 'Tis near the hour.

Thor. (*With indignant surprise.*) You trifle !

Llan. Don't object To my poor Cupid. He's a comelier god Than Miss Blake swears by — Plutus !

Thor. How ?

Llan. You know Your ward so little ? She's a sparkling eye, But shrewder than 'tis bright. Sir, by her sex Nature has spoiled a lawyer. There be women Who shine in drawing rooms ; some captivate On horseback ; some are irresistible In kitchens ; but her sphere's a pleader's chambers : Some charmers lure by dress ; some melt by music ; Some, with the imperious lightnings of their eyes, Effect a breach in hearts ; some awe by learning ; She's none of these — *her forte's arithmetic.*

You should have heard my wooing An hour back. "Anne, behold me at your feet," I cried. — " You'll give me hope ? " What was her answer ? Straight to the point. She asked my yearly income — Net — after all deductions ; if indeed I were a peer's next heir ; would live in London, Take her to court, mix with the world, and see She matched its proudest — for all which *perhaps* She'd give me a wife's duty. As for love, I must omit that trifle.

Thor. Well !

Llan. I promised. Her frankness suits me. I prefer a hand Labelled *for sale*, to one that coyly slides Into your palm and tingles for your purse.

Thor. (*Energetically.*) It shall not be.

Llan. It shall, if she consent.

My truth's engaged to it. Are you a rival,
That you would thwart me?

Thor. No; for me love's spark
Glows not within her breast; but, sir, I knew
And loved her father. When in India
One high in rule aspersed my soldier name,
His honest, fearless pen disproved the lie,
And won me back that amulet true souls
Must wear or perish — honor! We grew friends,
Heart friends, until he died — most poor — most noble!
I'd save his child from sin

Llan. Sin!

Thor. That black sin
Which vows what the heart shrinks from. You have said
She loves you not.

Llan. You're warm, I find, sir. Time
Cuts short this conference. (*He bows coldly and goes out, L. H.*)

Thor. Nay, I follow then.
Anne, Anne, whom I so loved, — my once betrothed!
I bear thy loss; but could I bear thy shame?

(*He follows LLANISTON out, L. H.*)

Enter SIR JOSHUA, LADY TOPPINGTON, and ANNE, R. H.

Sir Josh. But hear me, my dear niece.

Anne. Leave me, Sir Joshua!
You may trust me, madam!

Lady Top. You'll give full consent
To Llaniston's suit.

Anne. I've said it.

Sir Josh. Quick, consent, dear Anne,
Say, quick! My maxim is, Secure the bird
While the lime's fresh. 'Twas so I won your aunt.
Ha, ha! You'll heed my maxim?

Anne. If you'll leave me
To ponder it.

Sir Josh. And, further, niece, don't tell him
You take him for his money. Men don't like it.
Truth isn't told at all times, and in courtship
One never tells it.

Anne. Yet that very truth
I'll tell unless you leave me.

Lady Top. (*Apart to SIR JOSHUA.*) You'll spoil all.

Sir Josh. I'm not at ease. She'll change her mind, and Llaniston
Call in his mortgage. — One more word, and then
I'll go indeed. You're sure you'll not relent,
And marry Thorold? Thorold, who despised
The poor dependant!

Anne. Listen! By each good
Men value, — by what gold or a lord's smile
Is to your heart, or pride to my own crushed one,

Or prayers to gasping lips, — *that poor dependant*
Vows never to wed Thorold ! Now withdraw.

Lady Top. You may, and satisfied. That vow would bind her
Though her life paid it. Come !

Sir Josh. Farewell, dear niece !
You'll be discreet, now ?

Lady Top. (*Forcing him off, R. H.*) Come !

Sir Josh. A quick consent !
You'll give a quick consent, — you'll heed my maxim,
While the lime's fresh — ha, ha !

(*Goes out in glee with LADY TOPPINGTON, R. H.*)

Anne. (*Looking after them.*) Were my mind less fixed,
'Twould swerve revolted from the path *you* travel.

No matter now. One impulse like the glare
Of a volcano inwards lights my soul,
And shows it its own nature — fire and stone.
My tears, that burned like lava when they fell,
Like that congeal to rock. One hope, one aim,
One pulse of life, — that *I*, the poor, abased,
Deserted outcast, by my will and brain
Rise to far heights of power, of woman's power,
To dazzle and enslave ! Then *he* may feel
I had the strength to rule ; I might have had
The strength to love and bless ! — Now to my fate.

(*As she advances to door, THOROLD re-enters, L. H., and confronts her.*)

Thor. Stay, Anne ! Where would you go ?

Anne. To the library.

Thor. Upon what errand ?

Anne. (*With haughty coldness.*) Sir !

Thor. You doubt my right to question ? — I'm your guardian.

Anne. But not my jailer ; 'tis my will to pass ;
You block my way.

Thor. And is it *I* alone
That block your way ? Are there no crowding shapes
Such as the soul sees — youth's sweet instincts gazing
With sorrow-stricken faces, memory, conscience —
To warn you from the gulf ?

Anne. I've not the brain
To solve a riddle, nor the time.

Thor. Then wait,
And hear me solve it. Your way leads to Llaniston,
And you'll accept his suit.

Anne. (*After a pause.*) You're right. Such is
My way and purpose. Shall I pass ?

Thor. Not yet.

Anne. I must, save force should bar me : quit my path.

Thor. You fear to hear me speak, then ?

Anne. Fear ! No, speak !

(*She sits and coldly motions him to proceed : a pause.*)

What's your theme ?

Thor. Guilt ! You would marry, yet deny the love
Makes wedlock sacred.

Anne. Do you boast Heaven's right
To judge the heart ?

Thor. No. — Have I misjudged yours ?
Say that, and go !

Anne. I'll pay the forfeiture
Of my own deed.

Thor. Do you know that forfeit ?

Anne. Count it,
And then see if I shrink.

Thor. Count what she forfeits
Who weds and gives no heart. I'll try, though words,
Which figure outward loss, appraise not ruin
In things immortal. — First, she forfeits truth ;
She forfeits womanhood in love, its essence ;
Cuts off earth's blessed commerce with the skies ;
Profanes all sacred forms ; makes home a sound,
The temple an exchange, the shrine a counter,
The grave a common sod, where never kneels
Love that points upward !

Anne. (Aside.) And this thing *he* made me ! —
The peril's on my head. (Half rising.)

Thor. And would you brave
What freezes me to tell ? Hear my last plea,
Then as you will. Alas ! no parent's voice
May warn — implore ! I'd speak of yours, I'd tell you
Why you ne'er knew a father.

Anne. Speak.

Thor. You know already
How toil brought sickness, sickness poverty ;
How — bowed in mind and frame — your father sat
By his cold hearth, yet from one faithful breast
Drew warmth and hope. Before him knelt his wife,
Your mother !

Anne. Well !

Thor. He loved her, as they only
Can love who suffer, loved her — soul and form.
Her form was as the crystal to the light,
Her soul — the light that filled it. — Yet *they parted* !
Those twin lives broke, and blent on earth no more !

Anne. What parted them ?

Thor. Well asked ! — What *could* ? Not want, —
They had quaffed it to the dregs, and in its cup
Pledged love anew ; not exile, — where he stood
Was home to her ; not chains, — her faithful tears
Had rusted them to free him ; not the seas, —
They had foundered on one plank ; not Iceland snows, —
You had tracked her footfall there ! All these, men brave
For Gold ; why, Love had mocked them !

Anne. Tell me, then,
What severed them ?

Thor. *They had a child — an infant.*

Famine was at their threshold. For their child
Those true hearts quailed. They sought your uncle's aid.
He offered shelter to the wife and babe.—

Denied it to the husband!

Anne. And my father?

Thor. Strained

Your mother to his breast, till soon their eyes
Lit on the form that clung for life to hers;
They saw its wan, pinched cheek, the blight of want
Creep on their blossom. *They could save it!* — he
With one long kiss, till their souls met again,
Embraced his wife, unwound his beggared arms,
And said — *Wife, go!* — And for her child she went!

Anne. (Aside.) I must quit or yield. (She rises.)

Thor. (Detaining her.) You were that child — for you
They wrenched the bent of life, — slid from the raft
That buoyed their fainting limbs, that you might ride
The sorrows where they sunk!

Anne. Cease!

Thor. Will you pay

That mighty debt by sin? — a sin that mocks
The love they worshipped. See, your mother speaks —
She pleads — look in her face.

(Snatches the miniature from his breast, and places it in her hand.)

Anne. Her face! that portrait
My mother's face?

Thor. Even so.

Anne. My mother, mother!

(Sinks on her knee, reverently pressing her lips to portrait.)

(THOROLD gazes on ANNE with deep emotion, and exits, L. H.)

END OF ACT IV.

ACT V.

SCENE. — *Library in Toppington House, as in Act II.*

Enter SIR JOSHUA and LADY TOPPINGTON, R. H.

Sir Josh. Refused him! Anne refused him!

Lady Top. Calmly, firmly!

I've seen the letter.

Sir Josh. Refuse Llaniston!

Twelve thousand pounds a year, and a near earldom,
Flung back like a gown in tatters! Why, it's impious;
It's crossing Providence; — and he'll claim his mortgage.

Ungrateful minx, to ruin me, her friend
And benefactor !

Lady Top. Hush ! She'll marry him.

Sir Josh. She'll not — to spite me.

Lady Top. But she will — to *escape* you,
And she's no choice. — Mark ! I've persuaded Llaniston,
Not her own will refused him, but her guardian's.
He'll wait a second answer. Thorold leaves
At once for India. It seems some mines there
Have brought him sudden wealth.

Sir Josh. (*Impatiently.*) There's luck ! 'Twas said
Those mines would fail : shares went for nothing. — Now
Their owners turn out princes, and count thousands
For their risked hundreds. There's luck ! (*Paces the room, then*
composes himself.)

He's no thoughts, though,
To waste on Anne.

Lady Top. And she would rather starve
Than be his debtor. In great poverty
Her father died. Llaniston had that from Thorold :
Her only choice, then, lies between her suitor
And you, her *benefactor*. O, she'll marry !

Sir Josh. Ay, or repent it. Hush !
She's here.

Enter ANNE, simply attired, R. H.

Anne. I came,
Madam, to tell you, what 'tis fit you learn.
I've pondered your friend's suit, and have refused it.

Sir Josh. (*Ironically.*) Can you deign your reason ?

Anne. Yes, he's generous,
And merits love. I felt none.

Sir Josh. O ! We're meek,
We're nice, it seems. We can so well afford
The luxury of a conscience. — We can't marry.
It wounds our principles ! Let principle
Feed, clothe, and house you.

Lady Top. Stay, unmanly tyrant ;
She'll hate you.

Sir Josh. Let her. — She'll the sooner seek
A husband's shelter.

Lady Top. (*Kindly to ANNE.*) 'Tis your last resource.
He'll grind you in the dust. — Your pride forbids
All thought of Thorold ; nay, your vow.

Anne. (*Emphatically.*) The sin
Of my rash, selfish heart, which his recoils from,
Forbids it too ; nay, could he pardon, still
The poor dependant, who forsook him humble,
Will never share his greatness.

Sir Josh. (*Aside, exultingly.*) Then all's safe.
She's in my power ! (*He moves to the door, R. H.*)

Lady Top. Yield, Anne !

Anne. Go, madam !

(*LADY TOPPINGTON follows SIR JOSHUA out, R. H.*)

Anne. Yield !

Plunge back into that guilt whence Thorold snatched me !

Never. *He loved me !* 'Twas my mother's face

Stung me to jealous madness. (*Gazing on the portrait which she wears.*)

He may, he must

Despise me now — the tears of my remorse

He may not see nor trust. Within his hand

Mine may not anchor, when storms lash me on ;

And when I die, upon my upraised eyes

No love may float from his ; but *once* he loved me,

And I will keep my soul inviolate to his love's shadow.

Lloyd. (*Who enters cautiously, L. H.*) Darling pet, dear child,

The colonel's here, and asks an interview

Ere he sets sail.

Anne. Sets sail !

Lloyd. For India.

Why, sure, you've heard it.

Anne. No ; or heard it but

As in a dream. Sets sail for India !

Lloyd. It's strange ! all's strange — that he should prove a hero,

A great man the world talks of, one whose name's

In the newspapers ! Why, all the tenants round

Are bent to honor him, and in procession

To see him to his ship.

Anne. To his ship ! * * * Heaven bless them !

They know his worth.

Lloyd. (*Observing her emotion.*) Nay, bird, he's little worth
Who'd wrong or slight thee !

Anne. Lloyd !

Lloyd. Don't thrust me off.

I meant no ill. I'll call him kind, to please you.

He may forsake you ; all may ; but not Lloyd !

Anne. (*Casting her arms round her neck.*) Dear Lloyd ! * * *

he waits.

(*LLOYD snatches her hand, kisses it, and goes out, L. H.*)

Is it real ? To meet once more,

Then part, most like forever. To think, to-morrow

Even the white speck of his sail will vanish,

And a whole life slide from me in an hour.

Is it real ? — I must be calm. He shall not catch

One cry of this wild grief. From me who left

His lot when it seemed lowly, love itself

Would look like interest ; he might think me *sordid* ! —

I could not bear that pang.

Enter THOROLD, followed by a SERVANT with casket and packet, L. H.

Thor. So, friend ! the casket. (*Takes it and places it on table.*)

Serv. A packet, just delivered, sir !

(Hands it to THOROLD, and goes out, L. H.)

Thor. (Opening it, and taking out a deed.) Ah, from Llaniston ! (Looking at ANNE, who affects to occupy herself with books and prints.) How all unmoved she looks ! She never loved me.

(Advances to her with casket.) Anne, 'tis our farewell meeting !

Anne. So I've heard

You're called hence suddenly. (Points to a chair.)

Thor. And ere I leave

Would end a guardian's duties. It may chance

I shall return no more.

Anne. (Aside.) No more ! * * * You've friends —

* * * I mean you've friends in England, who would grieve —

* * * That is — regret to think so.

Thor. (Turning aside with emotion.) What we two

Seemed once to one another ! and we part

Forever with regret ! (After a pause, with forced calmness,) Regret's the word ;

It suits our life. — Hopes sink, the dark abyss

Parts, closes, — and all's sunshine !

Anne. Ay, above ! (Aside.)

Thor. (Opening casket.) We trifle and waste time. First take this token,

Your mother's hair. The words your father wrote,

And I — when time effaced them — wrote anew. —

Here are her letters ; some were in their courtship,

Some traced the year she died. (Giving them.) You weep, — ah, wear

In your heart's depths their memory, though mine

Has no more place there !

Anne. Yours no place ! — you think —

No matter —

Thor. Anne !

Anne. (As with sudden recollection.) Ah, I can speak ! — Mark,

Thorold,

I've vowed and here repeat my pledge —

Thor. Hold ! Hold !

Anne. Never to link my abject lot with yours !

'Tis sworn, the choked tide's free. — I love you — LOVE you !

You can't misjudge me now !

Thor. No.

Anne. Hear me still,

You'll rest to-morrow. You have seen me rash,

Wilful, unjust ; — worse — ay, you must have deemed so —

Basely ambitious, bartering for gold

And rank your priceless love ! O Thorold, 'twas not

A hireling heart's indifference ; 'twas a proud,

Stung heart's delirium !

Thor. Ay, say on !

Anne. From childhood,

Friendless, despised, a common mark for taunts

That poisoned where they pierced, you met me, saved me ;
 My mind grew happier, worthier, nearer yours,
 Till — O, deep shame ! — doubt sprung there — I was tempted
 By wiles that looked like truth to think you faithless ;
 Mock proofs swarmed round me, ringing in my ear
 This knell — HE TOO ABANDONS ! There my soul
 Lost light, chart, compass ; I but knew *one* star ;
 It vanished — and I struck ! (*Casts herself before him.*)
 Thor. (*Attempting to raise her.*) Best loved ! — rise, rise !

(Enter SIR JOSHUA, LADY TOPPINGTON, and LLANISTON, R. H.)

Sir Josh. (To ANNE.) How ! don't you hear the colonel ? —
 Rise, release him ! (*She rises.*)
 (Apart to her.) He'll none of you. A marriage contract waits
 Your signature.

Anne. It must wait.

Sir Josh. Do my will,
 Or quit my doors. (*Losing all self-control.*)

Llan. Silence ! — I sought a wife,
 And not a slave.

Lady Top. Remember, Anne, your vow ! —
 That poor dependant ne'er will wed with Thorold.

Thor. Was that your vow ?

Anne. It was.

Sir Josh. Ay, word for word.

Thor. Then I annul it. *No dependant stands there !*
 Those Indian mines ! (*Laying his hand on casket.*)

Sir Josh. Are nought to her. Her father
 Died poor.

Thor. Most poor. For in those mines he risked his all —
 Half a life's earnings to redeem his child.
 That darling hope seemed blighted ; the scant ore
 Scarce paid the miners' toil, and with vain throes
 For the far heart he might not clasp to his,
 Her father died.

Sir Josh. Ay !

Thor. He died — *not his act !*
 Still delved the miners — delved till earth revealed
 A vein — a realm of wealth !

Sir Josh. Hers !

Thor. In the outcast
 Behold the heiress ; in the maid your fraud
 Divorced from love, the — (*Turns to ANNE.*) May I speak that
 word ?

You're no dependant now ! —

Anne. Yes, speak. (*He opens his arms, into which she rushes.*)

Thor. The wife,
 The wife !

Sir Josh. 'Tis false — you fool me !

Thor. Her father's dying breath

Bound me to silence on her fate while doubtful,
 That hoping nothing, failure might not wound her.
 Hence I concealed my guardianship and station ;
 For her dear self I wooed her — for myself
 She chose me !

Llan. Humph ! that's soothing, since I've lost her.

Thor. (Gaily.) Nay, she's more yours than ever ; you most
 prized her
 When she was hard to win ; you'll doubly prize her
 Now that's impossible.

(ANNE smilingly gives LLANISTON her hand.)

Enter JILLOTT and LLOYD hastily, C. D.

Jil. Sir Joshua, the tenants and a mob
 Of the — hem ! — inferior classes through the gates
 Pour in by hundreds.

Lloyd. With a band and banners,
 To pay respect to the colonel.

Sir Josh. Drive them hence !
 Send for a constable. Respect to *him* !

Thor. Stir not an inch. They're welcome.

Sir Josh. Sir ! your right ?

Thor. (Producing deed.) This forfeit mortgage of your lands,
 which Llaniston
 Assigns to me, and I to Anne for dowry.

You would have driven her from your roof,
 And she —

Anne. Will grant him one for shelter. So, my father
 Had said —

Thor. And so your husband : — far from hence, though,
 And humble like his fortunes.

Llan. That's *your* sentence.

Thor. (To LADY TOPPINGTON.) You, madam —

Lady Top. Have weak nerves, — and *he's* my husband !

Llan. True ; she's exempt. (Distant music.) Hark ! music !
 (SIR JOSHUA and LADY TOPPINGTON retire.)

Anne. (Clinging to THOROLD.) In thine honor !

Thor. Let all make holiday. The ship shall sail
 This tide without us. (To ANNE.) What's ambition's wreath
 To love regained ?

Anne. And what is love regained,
 To thine, which, sorely tempted, ne'er was lost ?
 (During the concluding lines the crowd gradually approach the window
 with banners. Music. Air, "See the Conquering Hero comes," as
 THOROLD turns towards the window with ANNE.)

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CURTAIN.

CAST OF CHARACTERS.

	<i>Wheeling, Va., 1857.</i>	<i>Boston Museum, 1857.</i>	<i>Wallack's, New York, 1858.</i>	<i>Boston Museum, 1858.</i>
SIR JOSHUA TOPPINGTON	Mr. P. C. Cunningham	Mr. E. Thompson	Mr. W. H. Norton	Mr. F. Whitman
THOROLD	" F. B. Conway	" E. F. Keach	" J. W. Lester	" L. P. Barrett
LEANSTON	" Williams	" J. Davies	" A. H. Davenport	" J. Davies
JILLOTT	" Donnelly	" Wheedlock	" Jeffries	" De Lara
SERVANT	" Stout	" Dolano	" Parsloe	" Delano
LADY TOPPINGTON	Mrs. Hachett	Mrs. J. R. Vincent	Mrs. Vernon	Mrs. J. R. Vincent
ANNE BLAKE	" V. Cunningham	" D. P. Bowers	" Hoey	" V. Cunningham
LLOYD	" Williams	" W. C. Gladstone	" Cooke	" Preston
DAVIES	" Donnelly	" Preston	Miss Tree	Miss Fredericks

A LIFE'S RANSOM.

A Play,

IN FIVE ACTS.

WRITTEN BY

WESTLAND MARSTON,

AUTHOR OF

The Patrician's Daughter — *Strathmore* — *Philip of France and Marie de Meranie* —
Anne Blake — *Borough Politics* — *Heart of the World* —
Gerald, a Dramatic Poem.

WITH

ORIGINAL CASTS, COSTUMES, AND THE WHOLE OF THE STAGE
BUSINESS, CORRECTLY MARKED AND ARRANGED, BY
MR. J. B. WRIGHT, ASSISTANT MANAGER
OF THE BOSTON THEATRE.

BOSTON:
WILLIAM V. SPENCER,
128 WASHINGTON STREET, (CORNER OF WATER.)

CAST OF CHARACTERS.

*Lyceum Theatre,
London, 1857.*

BASIL, LORD REVESDALE, (a young Nobleman of high descent, but impoverished fortunes,).....	Mr. C. Dillon
MATTHEW RINGWOOD, (a Country Gentleman of great wealth,).....	Mr. Barrett
ARTHUR RINGWOOD, (his Son.).....	Mr. McLein
BANCROFT, (a Country Magistrate,).....	Mr. Stuart
DRAYTON, (Political Miles, Holmes,).....	“ Normanton
EMISARIES, (Political Miles, Holmes,).....	“ Burt
RICHARD, (an upper Servant in Lord Revesdale's household,).....	“ Poynter
GILES, (an old Forester in Lord Revesdale's service,).....	Mr. Shore
OFFICER,.....	Mr. Holston
LANDLORD,	“ Simpson
FELICIA REVESDALE, (Sister to Lord Revesdale,).....	Mrs. C. Dillon
ALICE FRAMPTON, (an aged Domestic, and Mother to Richard,).....	Mrs. Stannett
(2) Dependents of Lord Revesdale, Peasants, Officers, Soldiers, &c.	.....

SCENE.—Southern Coast of England.

TIME.—Reign of James the Second. 1685.

A LIFE'S RANSOM.

COSTUME.

Revesdale — Square-cut maroon-colored velvet coat, with very short sleeves and large cuffs, loose about the waist, flaps and pockets very low at sides; long-flapped maroon vest, and full trunks; small gold buttons and gold holes throughout the suit; high black bucket-topped boots, with high heels and square toes; large slouched black hat, with black feathers, narrow gold round rim; white cravat, long lace ends; brown, very long flowing ringlet wig, called a periwig; full sleeves and ruffles; sword and bawdric.

Matthew — Drab cloth suit, heavily trimmed with black velvet; black wig; appointments same as Revesdale.

Arthur — Sky blue or French gray, with silver holes and buttons; brown wig; appointments same as Revesdale.

Bancroft — Plain black velvet suit, same style as Revesdale; black silk stockings; high-heeled, square-toed black shoes; black velvet shoe tie across shoe; hat turned up at the two sides; bald, gray, short, ringlet wig.

Drayton — Red cloth coat; gilt buttons; white vest; black trunks; appointments same as Revesdale.

Miles — Gray mixed cloth suit; black velvet holes and buttons; appointments same as Revesdale.

Holme — Plain fawn coat; fawn trunks; black vest; same appointments as Revesdale.

Richard — Plain green coat; red vest; green trunks; red stockings and clocks; shoes; appointments same as Bancroft; brown ringlet wig.

Giles — Loose leather doublet; green trunks; gray stockings; gray wig; black, old men's shoes; white cravat; black slouched hat.

Militia Officers — Red sack coat, white holes; white vest; white breeches; slouched hats; high black boots; swords and white leather belts; white cravats; ringlet wigs.

Landlord — Plain drab sack coat; blue vest; red trunks; black stockings; black, old men's shoes; bald, brown wig.

Servants — Same style as Richard, but plainer.

Retainers — Sack coats, various colors; vests and trunks; shoes and stockings; slouched hats.

Peasants — Same style as retainers.

Prince of Orange — Crimson coat and trunks; white satin figured vest; the suit heavily trimmed with broad gold lace; red silk stockings; yellow clocks; black shoes, high, red heels; immense brown, flowing, ringlet wig; slouched hat, turned up at one side, with diamond loop, trimmed round with white ostrich feathers, and large feathers in hat; heavy bawdric, and handsome Spanish rapier; appointments, &c., same as Revesdale.

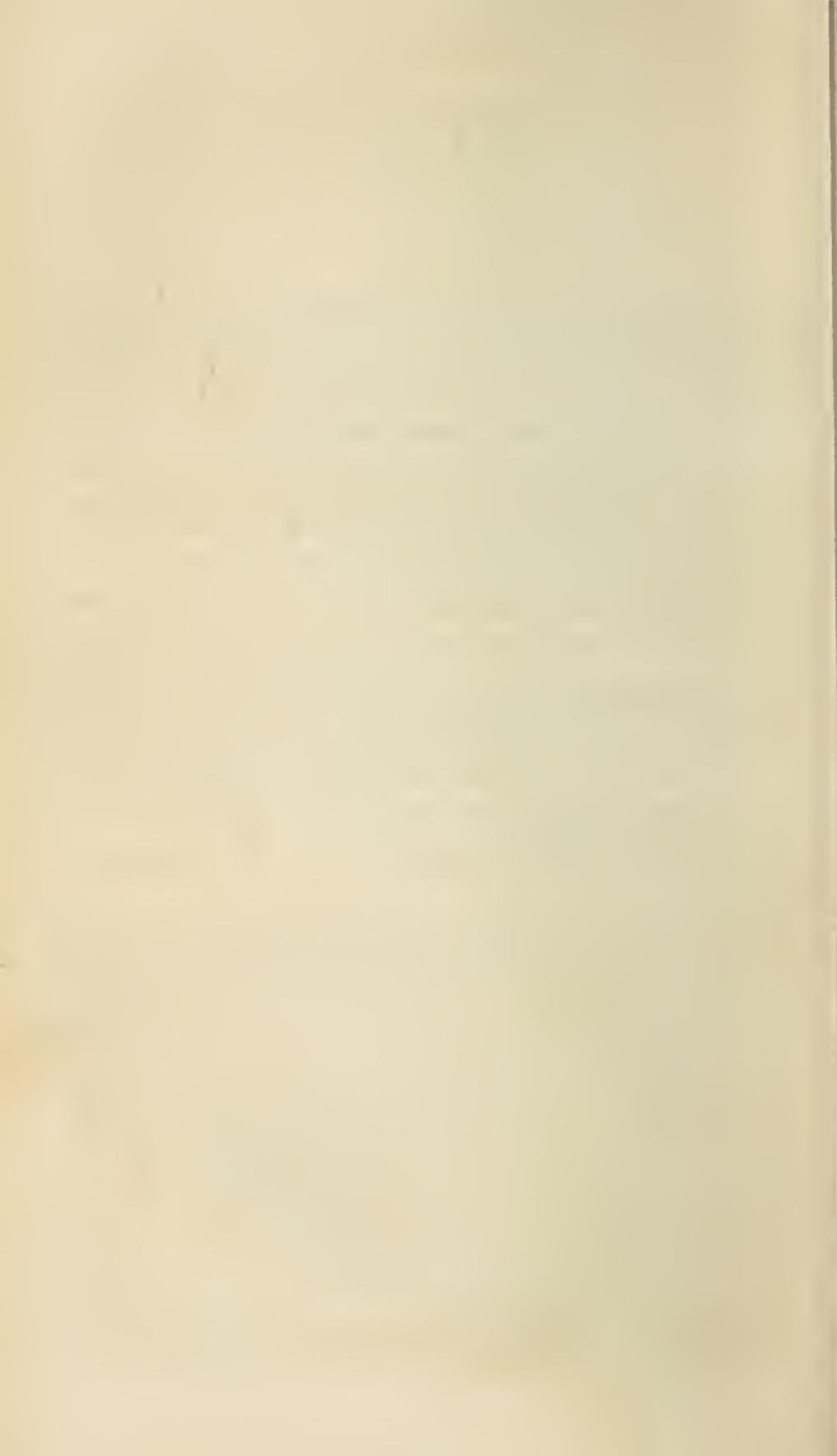
Sailors — Blue pea jackets: long-flapped red vests; canvas petticoat trousers; blue trunks; light-blue stockings; black shoes.

Soldiers — Same style as the Militia, with cuirass under coat, and over the vests.

Officers — Same as soldiers, gold laced.

Felicia — *1st Dress* — A green velvet dress, long waisted; Elizabethian stomacher; amber underskirt; the dress looped back, to show the rich underskirt completely; the sleeves tight to the elbow, turned back with a cuff, the same as the men's coats, and a profusion of lace ruffles, served with the help of the gloves to conceal the arms; high, red-heeled black shoes and cross bows; tight blue silk or amber stockings, clocked; the hair combed over cushions, from the forehead, and covered by tiers of stiffened lace and ribbon, arranged in plaits, and rising one above another to a considerable height, surmounted by a scarf, the ends of which hang down on either side; this structure was called a *commore*; patches on the face were fashionable. *2d Dress* — Light brocade dress; white satin skirt; white shoes and stockings, same style. *3d Dress* — Same as first.

Alice — Plain black stuff dress; short sleeves; medium cuffs and black mitts; brown underskirt; gray stockings; black shoes, high heels; high cap; long ears.



A LIFE'S RANSOM.

ACT I.

SCENE I. — 2 G. *Grounds in front of Revesdale Castle. The Castle painted on flats, with parapets and walls extending off R. H., and door of Castle practical, 2 E. R. H.*

RICHARD FRAMPTON discovered, leaning thoughtfully on a gun, on R. C. GILES and group of PEASANTS and RETAINERS of LORD REVESDALE rush on from 2 E. L. H., and surround RICHARD.

Peasants. Here's Master Frampton !

Retainers. Master Richard Frampton ! he'll tell us all.

Enter ALICE, door, 2 E. R. H.

Alice. What, Richard ! my son Richard !

(She makes her way through the group to FRAMPTON.)

Rich. (c.) So, so, mother !

Alice. (r. c.) It can't be true — I won't believe 'tis true ;
My young lord sell his lands — sell Revesdale Park !

Giles. (l. h.) The castle, too — old almost as the earth
On which it stands, and which, since it has stood,
Never owned man for master but a Revesdale !

Rich. Ay, lands and castle, all must go !

Alice. Why must ?

Rich. Because the king won't pay his debts — vast sums
By our late master, brave Lord Godfrey, raised
To help the first King Charles, who perished, leaving
The claim uncancelled. Then came the second Charles,
Who put Lord Godfrey off with promised payment,
Till in one month both prince and subject died.
King James, his brother's heir, sat on his throne ;
My master's heir was beggared !

Giles. But King James
Will give my lord his rights ?

Rich. King James but chid him
'or thrusting in his need 'midst public cares ;
So sent him with his sister home to ruin.

Giles. Our young Lord Basil — open hand that ne'er
Forgot the poor !

Alice. Ay, sirs, and his sweet sister,
Lady Felicia, whom but to look on
Were cure for evil !

Giles. Talking of *evil*, look ! (Points off L. H.)

Rich. His worship, Master Bancroft ! 'Tis his cousin,
Living abroad, to whom my lord's estate
Stands pledged, to satisfy whose strict demand
It must be sold ; so wiils our magistrate.

Giles. Magistrate, 'sooth ! 'Twas more brute's deed than man's
To hunt to death by scores, as Bancroft did,
The poor mistaken souls who rose with Monmouth.

Alice. So said my lord and young Squire Ringwood.

Giles. All
To gain promotion ! Magistrate indeed !
Bloodhound !

Rich. Hush, hush ! he's here.

Giles and Peasants. Who cares ?

Enter BANCROFT, L. H. 1 E. All shrink back except RICHARD.

Ban. Well, friend, can I see your master ?

(RICHARD, who polishes his gun stock vigorously, makes no reply.)
D'ye hear ?

Your master, knave, I say ! (Advancing to him.)
Have you no answer ?

Rich. O, it's to *me* you speak ?

Ban. You knew it !

Rich. No ;

You called me *friend*, which I am not ; then *knave*,
Which I am not, not being your worship's friend.
My master's in discourse ; if you would see him,
You can wait his leisure, or return.

(A murmur of approbation from the group.)

To your tasks !

Alice. We'll bear your love and duty to my lady.

(PEASANTS and RETAINERS *exeunt*, 2 E. L. H. ALICE, RICHARD and GILES *exeunt door*, 2 E. R. H.)

Ban. Bloodhound ! My zeal that brought those rogues to justice,
Who leagued with Monmouth's duke against King James,
Has won me this new christening. Arthur Ringwood !

You taught the mob to hate me — taught this proud
And ruined lord, who now lies in my power —
Thanks to my cousin's mortgage — thus to brand me.
You, too, it was, who, at the festive board,
Refused me for a comrade, shrank from me
As from contagion, and before my peers
Shamed me forever ; you whose new command
In the militia still has foiled my plans.
He little deems the appointment was but given,

That, should his schemes be treasonous, they might
 The better be observed and he entrapped.
 Bloodhound ! I'll earn my name — swift, keen, untiring !
 Though, from loose gossip, I suspect young Ringwood
 Shared Monmouth's treason, was in arms for him,
 And that Lord Revesdale knows it. (*Looking off*, 1 E. R. H.)
 Soft ! 'tis Ringwood
 And the pet fawn of the park, Felicia Revesdale !
 'Slife ! his arms free with her ! The hound's in ambush.
 (*He retires through the door*, 2 E. R. H., and stands concealed.)

Enter MATTHEW RINGWOOD, followed by ARTHUR RINGWOOD and FELICIA REVESDALE, 1 E. R. H.

Matt. (L. H. *Laughing to himself.*) And she answered, Yes, so soon ! Ha, ha ! that boy
 Has the world at his fingers' ends ! To fight or argue,
 Discuss affairs of state, or win a woman —
 All's the same to him. (*To ARTHUR.*) Pooh, sir ! she repents,
 And droops her head.

Arth. (c.) You broke so suddenly
 Upon our conference —

Matt. O, conference !
 What two young hearts, masking for years with friendship,
 Can't fling aside their vizards, and display
 The honest love behind them, but it needs
 A conference, does it ?

Arth. 'Twas her very friendship,
 Frank, like a sister's, made me doubt till now
 Love's deeper spring beneath.

Matt. And what says the daughter
 Of those grim Normans to the rich brewer's grandson ?

Fel. (R. H.) That when she looks on him, she has no thought
 To spare for grandsires.

Matt. Tut ! How this news
 Will surprise Basil !

Arth. Yes ; his recent absence,
 And his reserve since then, have kept my hopes
 Strange to him yet.

Fel. Reserve !

Arth. When late deposed
 From his colonelcy in the militia,
 I stepped into his post ; 'tis this, I fear,
 Rankles his pride, which deems I built advancement
 On his disgrace.

Matt. Yet you but took the office
 To curb the cruel license of the soldiers,
 Prompted by Bancroft.

Arth. I had said as much ;
 But Basil would not hear me.

Fel. Bear with him,

My true, kind brother! By the king's injustice,
Soon to be driven from home, forlorn and poor,
Wrong makes him quick and proud.

Arth. Have we forgot
That to his generous silence and your shelter
I owed my life?

Matt. And you were strangers then.
Alas! poor Monmouth and that fatal night!

(*In a low and cautious tone, and advancing to the front,*
FELICIA up R. H.)

Oft, Arthur, have I rued the chance that threw you,
A peaceful subject, 'midst those hapless rebels!

Arth. 'Twas, as you say, but chance. My horse's path
They crossed, leagues from the field, poor fugitives,
A score to one pursuer! A brace of troopers,
Deaf to their cries, clove down those helpless wretches,
Staggering, unarmed, and famished! What could man,
Who had a heart and sword, do less than I —
Parry the slaughterous blow, and give them time
For flight and life?

Matt. Ay, lad, till the king's men,
Coming to their comrades' aid, forced you to fly
For your own life. Well that you were disarmed
And masked by twilight. Promise never more
To tempt your fate so.

Arth. (*Gayly.*) Sir, you'd bid me do it
Did the chance come round.

(*FELICIA advances down c., and lays her hand on his arm imploringly.*)
You too; you'd never ask
That I should grow so niggard of my years
As to keep down the impulse just or kind
That gives time worth. You'd have me live, I know,
Or long or brief, a thinking, loving man;
No torpid thing, that only measures time
By the almanac. To feel, to act, is life;
Who wants these lives not, sweet; he only breathes.

Matt. Here's an oration! Well, 'twas worth the risk
To hear the rogues tramp by, nor guess the traitor
Lurked snuggly by Felicia's loyal hearth.

Fel. (*c. Earnestly.*) My brother knew not that.

Arth. (*R. H.*) That you concealed me?
On that point I was silent; 'twas your wish.
But why? I met him with his retinue
At the castle gate, and told him all my plight.

Fel. He must not know you passed *within our doors*.
I kept the knowledge from him, that, if questioned,
He might deny it truly.

Matt. (*L. H.*) And so 'scape
The peril you incurred! O, wise as noble,
Thou'rt worthy of my boy!

Arth. And now to Basil.

Fel. He's held by strangers now.

Matt. To-morrow, then.

But mind you keep our secret, for I mean
Myself to tell him. 'Twill be brave to thaw
His pride in our warm love. Come, we'll all cheer him
In his harsh lot, and henceforth have one interest,
One home, one heart — perhaps one home, indeed ;
For there's a grand investment, a rare toy,
In stone that Arthur covets — a — Well, well,
I'll say no more — a new surprise for Basil !
You'll keep your word ; remember, now, I tell him.

(*Exeunt* MATTHEW, ARTHUR, and FELICIA, L. H. 1 E.)

Re-enter BANCROFT, *through the door*, 2 E. R. H.

Ban. Plague on the distance and my own dull ears !
I lost the most part ; but my brain is pregnant
With what did reach me. *Sheltered from some risk ?*
Sheltered by whom ? Her brother ? *Shelter, risk !*
Basil was silent ! Then the peril lay
In what he knew and told not. So I thought.
Young Ringwood was in arms for the Duke of Monmouth !
This modest squire, too, woos the fair Felicia,
Which my lord knows not, for he stands aloof.
That wound of the militia which I probed
Will fester, though he hid the sore from me.
To gender hate 'twixt the proud blood of Revesdale
And base-born Ringwood I have striven, *will strive*,
And from that hate perchance so work my ends
As to sting both, win the king's gratitude
To swell my lands to lift me into rank.
Sir Richard — *Bloodhound !* O, I must walk to cool !

(*Exit*, L. H. 1 E.)

SCENE II. — *A Gothic Library in Revesdale Castle, 3 and 5 G.* The room, which is in some confusion, is hung with weapons, portraits, &c. The arms of the Revesdale family are painted on a window, which is partly open L. H. F., fronting the park. Set door 2. E. I. H. Gothic sofa at back in c. Gothic table on R. H. ; on it pens, inkstand, parchments, and papers. Four Gothic chairs at table on R. H. ; two Gothic chairs on L. H.

LORD REVESDALE, DRAYTON, MILES, and HOLME seated at a table on R. H. C.

Dray. (L. H. of table.) What says your lordship ?

Rev. (R. H. of table.) That had I remained
In the militia, wherein, as you say,
My friend displaced me, I had scorned to use
The king's breast 'gainst himself.

Dray. But the *people* love you.
 Lift but your hand, hundreds of stalwart yeomen
 Will leap to horse.

Rev. I will not rashly peril
 Those honest, trusting hearts. As yet I know not
 Your plans, your strength, or your associates.

Holme. (At table, on R. H.) You know King James a tyrant to his
 people,
 And your immediate ruin.

Miles. (Lispingly, at L. of table, on R. H.) What can bind you
 To him who's left you nothing but a name?

Rev. My *last* possession ! You'll forgive me, therefore,
 If I'm jealous how I risk it. (All rise.)

Miles. (Aside.) What a look !
 They're well called the proud Revesdales.

Holme. To the point :
 Should William of Nassau set foot in England,
 Shall he have aid from you ?

Rev. I'll answer that
 When I've your scheme and know my comrades.

Dray. Ere
 We name them, sign this document. (Taking parchment from his
 breast.) It prays
 Prince William's presence here, to arbitrate
 Between the king and his wronged subjects.

Rev. (Perusing the paper.) It
 Exacts no pledge to arm in the quarrel ?

Dray. None.
Rev. (Signing it.) 'Tis signed. (Returns it to DRAYTON.)
Dray. And here's the list of those who share our venture.
 (Gives it. All come down.)

Rev. Sir Dudley Ford, Lord Harwood, Langton, Orme.
 High names !

Dray. Meet us an hour hence at my house,
 Where those in league assemble. Meantime, learn
 We're bound by mutual peril. Your subscription
 Is treason, and incurs its sentence — death !

Rev. For this you bade me sign, to force my silence
 By the base means of fear. I sought to know
 My comrades, and I know them. There's your path.

(Pointing to door, 2. E. L. H.)
Dray. Not by that door, an't please you. We require
 The screen of the forest. For our late precaution,
 Remember danger brooks not ceremony.
 In an hour we shall expect you. Friends, to horse !

(DRAYTON, MILES, and HOLME exeunt by the open window, L. flat.)
Rev. (Who paces the room, suddenly stopping short.) Psha ! psha !
 Why should it fret me that base hirelings
 Asked pledges for my truth ? 'Tis not with them
 I deal, but with their cause — a righteous protest
 Against this tyrant who treads down our laws,

Breaks every kingly oath, in the church's name ;
 Slays poor schismatics, while himself betrays
 The church to Rome ! My wronged and loyal house
 Falls from thee, James, in me ! I'll join these men,
 And for more secrecy afoot.

(*He seizes his hat and cloak from chair, R. sofa.*)

Enter FELICIA, door 2 E. L. H.

Rev. (R. C. *With great tenderness.*) Felicia !

Fel. (L. H.) Do you go forth ?

Rev. Ay, love, on urgent matters.

Fel. Urgent ! And you've not told them to your sister ?

Rev. Since we were orphans, have I known a joy

You knew not likewise ? 'Tis my cares alone

That would be secret.

(*Kissing her forehead and crossing towards the door, 2 E. L. H.*)

Fel. Stay, I've greetings for you
 From Master Ringwood. He would have you count
 His heart and home your own.

Rev. (Bitterly.) Was Arthur by
 To confirm this bounty ! (*Aside.*) — He who flaunts in honors
 Stripped from his friend, and so lends countenance
 To the court's insult !

Fel. Basil !

Rev. Girl, that man
 Would rise upon our ruin !

Fel. (Reproachfully, and fixing her eyes upon him.)
 Arthur Ringwood !

Rev. (After a pause.) I may have been unjust.

Fel. You were indeed.

Then you'll accept their welcome ; you *will*, Basil ?
 Are you too proud ?

Rev. What shield has poverty
 But pride ? In happier days you knew me free
 To all of worth, as liberal of kind thoughts
 As the day of light. My disk is darkened now ! —
 Let it die out, and all who gaze behold
 A void in heaven rather than glimmer on
 By the pensioned beams of others !

Fel. Should you spurn
 Those aids from man to man, the loftiest need
 To lean on or they fall ?

Rev. The line of Revesdale
 May fall ; it never *leaned*.

Fel. Be not so wrapped
 In pining for past greatness, as to scorn
 Life's present blessings ! Though the King —

Rev. My curse
 Hunt him to shame as flagrant as the glory

Of our crushed house ! May — O, 'tis brave to war
With these tongue pellets ! I've delayed too long.

(*FELICIA suddenly intercepting him, and laying her hand on his arm.*)

Why do you hold me ?

Fel. Basil, you nurse some scheme
Against the king.

Rev. Wondrous ! You're a Cassandra,
And deal in prophecy.

Fel. Like hers — of danger.

Rev. Excellent !

Fel. Is there none ?

Rev. And if there were,
Did ever daughter of our house urge *danger*
To bar a brother's path ?

Fel. She does not now,
If *duty* summons. See, I loose my clasp.
Say thou art called by that which in calm hours
Thy heart counts duty, and I bid thee go,
Though the risk be life.

Rev. I go, then. It is duty
To guard a people's rights.

Fel. One moment yet !
Is it the people's rights, or thine own wrongs,
That sway thee most ?

Rev. What matters which ?
Fel. Much, Basil.

Do things in their true names. Take thou thy vengeance,
If it be right, as vengeance : but don't call it
Love for a people's rights.

Rev. Both may combine.

Fel. Scarcely. Hate cannot blend with a pure will,
And not corrupt it. Brother, earth has seen
Few patriots. These, if they strove with wrong,
Stroved first by reason and by prayers ; hast thou ?
They knew each sounding of the nation's course ;
Dost thou, till late secluded in these walls ?
If they did strike, 'twas in extremity,
In grief, at cost of household ties, with yearnings
To sheathe the sword they drew ; canst thou so strike ?

Rev. Who lessons me, and dares to preach my duties ?

Fel. *Thyself*, whose truth and honor in clear seasons
Shone on thy sister's soul, and, kindling there,
Shine back to guide thee now in hours of storm !

Rev. (After a pause, dropping his cloak.)
You're right, Felicia. I forego this purpose
Till I have pondered well, and asked my heart
If honor prompt it. I'll not take revenge
Under the mask of justice. Yet 'twas all
He had left me in my wreck !

Fel. All? (Kneeling by his side and looking up to him.)

Rev. (Embracing her.) No, my sister!

TABLEAU.

REVESDALE in c.

FELICIA R. C., kneeling.

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*Same as Scene 1st, Act 1st.*

Enter LORD REVESDALE, followed by BANCROFT, door 2 E. R. H.

Rev. Be it so, sir; it is your cousin's right,
His fair undoubted right, to sell my lands.
So must my father's heavy debt be cancelled.

Ban. My kinsman, so he writes me, needs large sums
For present uses, so the lands must go.
Yet, though I've not much cause to bear you love,
It frets me that your ancient, proud domain
Should pass to strangers.

Rev. All that's needful else
You will see done.

Ban. Though if young Ringwood buys it,
'Twill scarcely fall to strangers.

Rev. Ringwood buy it!

Ban. Has he not broken with you upon this?

Rev. Never!

Ban. He might have thought, perhaps, the old Revesdale blood
Would fire at such succession, — the brewer's grandson!

Rev. (With an effort.) And my friend, sir! — He told you his
intent?

Ban. He told my agent. (Jestingly.) 'Tis a foolish thought,
But yet, had proof confirmed the general rumor
Of Ringwood's traitorous aid to the Duke of Monmouth,
He had found a different fate!

Rev. (Regarding him keenly.) There are such rumors, then?

Ban. (Aside.) He knows it! Proved, they'd check the aspiring
pride

That vaults into your seat.

Rev. Ay, sir; you've taught us what the king's mercy is.

Ban. (Aside.) You taunt me, do you?

Even to my face? (With feigned merriment.)

Why, you never thought

I meant the scaffold ! — Psha ! the king's grown lenient.
Most noted traitors 'scape with fine or exile.

Rev. Such converse, Master Bancroft, as affairs
Demand between us, I would give with patience
To you or any man. Beyond that point,
You trespass on my leisure.

Ban. (*Aside.*) Ay, the bloodhound
Is no fit mate for a Revesdale ! As you will.
Again, I say, I bear you little love,
And proffer none. But I respect a house
As old as yours, and hate the parasite
That thrives upon a ruin ! — (*Aside.*) Yes, he flinched !
I stung his ruling passion. Thanks to that,
And to my surly bluntness, which must tell
In time for honesty, — I'll mould him yet !

(*Exit BANCROFT, 1 E. L. H.*)

Rev. Again he couples Arthur's name with treason !
I must be wary ; a chance word, or look,
Might snare my friend. My friend ! who covertly
Plots to be Lord of Revesdale ! — He'd not steal
So subtly on my track, — see me driven forth
From my ancestral home, this native ground
Of my soul as well as body, and then kindle
His holiday taper in the silent halls,
Where my torch is gray in ashes !

Enter FELICIA, with RICHARD and GILES, door 2 E. R. H.

Fel. Yes, good friends,
I'll bear your message.

(*Exeunt RICHARD and GILES, door 2 E. R. H. FELICIA advances to REVESDALE.*)

You're in thought ?

Rev. (L. H.) No, sister !

Fel. (R. H.) Richard and Giles demand a boon.

Rev. From me !

What have I left to grant ?

Fel. That where you go,
They may go too. They are content for hire
To take what fortune sends ; or, unhired, serve you
For your love, that never let them feel like hirelings.

Rev. (*Much moved.*) True friends ! — I thank and bless them.
Age and sickness

Will chill those faithful hearts, and ruined Revesdale
Must let them perish aidless.

Fel. None so perish
Who trust in Heaven, my brother !

Rev. You say well,
And I'll not murmur. Though another week
Must see us strangers here, here where our banner
Flung, like a sunward wing, its mighty shade

O'er a brood of heroes ! — still I'll think whom Heaven
Has left me in my exile, thee !

Fel. My brother ! (He embraces her.)

Rev. And time shall teach me to endure, forget,
Ay, and hope too ! There — I say *hope* already !

Enter RICHARD, door 2 E. R. H.

Rich. A letter for your lordship. (Gives it.) Would it bore
Some news to cheer him ! (Exit, door 2 E. R. H.)

Rev. (Cheerfully.) We've this comfort, sister,
Our poverty is proof against ill tidings. (He opens and peruses the letter.) Ah, ah !

Fel. You're moved !

Rev. They'll cheat me and die out,
These words of light ! — O, like the tints of rainbows,
They build heaven's arch on storm, and, being as bright,
Perhaps may vanish like them !

Fel. What is this ?

Rev. Such joy as almost dazzles me to doubt.
Redemption of our house and wealth, though wealth
I prize but for our house !

Fel. Is this news sure ?

Rev. I trust so ; you might make it sure. It comes
From our best and most tried friend —

Fel. Dear, kind Lord Norville,
Who pressed your suit at court ?

Rev. Yes ; he has a hold,
He thinks, upon the minister who needs
His special service, and the price he asks
Is justice to his friend !

Fel. To you ! O, bless him !

Rev. That's what he asks for. Bless him, for you can !
This flashed on me at times when you met in London.

Fel. What flashed upon you, Basil ?

Rev. What he writes
So plainly here — forgive my joy's abruptness —
He loves you, and would wed you !

Fel. Me ! — Lord Norville ! —
Impossible !

Rev. Why so ? — My friend is noble
In heart, mien, birth —

Fel. I know it.

Rev. One for whom
You've oft avowed regard, which must, in time,
Ripen to love !

Fel. (Aside.) Although I promised silence,
I must reveal my troth to Arthur. — Brother,
I cannot wed Lord Norville —

Rev. Cannot ! — Pause,
Think what's at stake — the upholding of our line

In honor by his aid ! They'll grant his wife —
He writes it — what they might refuse his friend.

Fel. You talk not like yourself.

Rev. Myself ! Our race

Adjures thee through thy brother !

Fel. Basil !

Rev. (Pointing to the castle.) Look
On that gray pile — from base to parapet
A fane of glory ! — stone ? 'Tis built of deeds,
Compact with hearts' blood ; heroes trod its courts
Whose names are histories ; voices from its halls
Swept o'er a realm like winds that wake a sea ;
A tide of memory richer than the sun
Pours through each loophole, and its very dust
Sown with tradition — glory's fallen seed
Stirs with the quickening future !

Fel. O, beware !

Such pride tempts Heaven.

Rev. Heaven made the vale — it sinks ;
The peak — it soars. I tell thee to my frame
Its vital flood's less dear than to my soul
The trust my fathers left. Felicia, think —
The court against me, not a chance to rise
In war or council, doomed to sordid need
And banishment from hence — as, if you scorn
Lord Norville's suit, we are — what path remains
Of enterprise or greatness ?

Fel. Brother, greatness

Is of the soul, not fortune. Emulate
The spirit of our sires, but leave to Heaven
The question of their fame.

Enter BANCROFT, 1 E. L. H.

Rev. I ask my sister
For life, or what is dearer, and she deigns me
A homily for answer.

(Turning from her, he perceires BANCROFT on L. H.)

Here again ? (They converse apart from FELICIA.)

Ban. (L. H.) My errand's brief. Young Ringwood asks my
agent

For an inventory ; will you grant it ?

Rev. (c.) How ?

Ban. A catalogue of all your movables —
Plate, pictures, suits of armor, family jewels —
No, jewels pass as heirlooms.

Rev. You jest !

Ban. 'Tis natural ;

Men like to know the worth of that they buy.
But he wrote in secret, and with emphasis
Forbade that you should know it.

Rev. Wrote in secret !

Ban. But as we could not take the inventory
As yet without your license, I was bound
To let you hear.

Rev. Such insult ! O, my 'ears
Have played me false !

Ban. Then trust your eyes, and read
His letter to my agent, who waits yonder.

Rev. In his own hand !

Ban. 'Tis strange ! I thought these plans
Bore on his contract for your sister.

Rev. (Starting, and glancing rapidly at FELICIA, up R. H. c.)
Hush !

I must hear all !

Ban. You can't be ignorant
Of his suit.

Rev. His suit — to wed my sister ! Such an aim
Had jarred upon my love when most in tune !
But now — You bear him malice !

Ban. I don't dote
Either on him or you ; but I brook the proud
More easily than the false.

Rev. (Aside.) Why should I doubt
This man ? Though fierce and violent, he wears
His nature frankly, shows his plain distaste
For me, nor stoops to counterfeit a smoothness,
As would dissemblers.

Ban. You may think me bitter.
Well, I come of an old stock myself, and like not
Your treacherous upstarts. Let me ask you this :
Who, when the court dismissed you the militia,
Leaped to the vacant post, making your slight
His honor ? Prudent friend ! Who now by stealth,
Lest your pride wake and thwart him, seeks possession
Of your house and union with your blood, to gild
His base beginnings ?

Rev. Hold ! I'll sift your story
But to disprove it. Hither ! I'll return
Anon, Felicia. Hither, sir ; unfold
This business as we walk.

(*Exeunt REVESDALE and BANCROFT, 1 E. L. H.*)

Fel. (Coming forward, c.) O, bitter strait !
I must be false to love — nay, worse — to conscience,
Or crush my brother's hopes. Alas that pride
Should blight a heart so rich ! Most perilous
Is pride to noble natures. Other sins
Stand naked and repel ; but pride doth filch
The garb of poetry, and the flawed idol
Shows like a god.

(*Retires up centre, L.*)

Enter MATTHEW and ARTHUR RINGWOOD, R. H. 1 E.

Arth. (R. H.) See ! 'tis herself — Felicia !
How still, how mute, how like a living dream
That's conscious of its bliss, and will not stir
Lest motion end it !

Matt. Dream, forsooth ! — (*Aside.*) He talks
Poetry like the laureate ! Dream ! Do dreams
Glow with a flush like hers, or do their steps
Come tinkling on men's hearts like hers on thine ?

Arth. (*Crosses to c. Embracing her.*) My own !

Fel. Arthur ! (*Advancing, L. H.*)

Matt. Is she a dream, lad ?

Arth. How !

There's trouble in thine eye.

Fel. (L. H.) I'm glad you're come.

Matt. (R. H.) I'm glad we're *here*. He dragged me from my
pillow

Straight to my horse. You lovers that are fed
On the dews of violets, you sleep walkers
In the realms of fancy, that can take your rest
With open eyes, should pity common folk
That have digestions, and that want their breakfast.

Arth. (c.) But where is Basil ?

Matt. Is our secret safe ?

Is he yet i' the dark ?

Fel. My friend, my father !

Matt. Well ;

Speak, love !

Fel. Untoward affairs have vexed my brother.

You'll treat him gently ?

Matt. Gently ! Why, how else
But gently should I treat him ? I bestow
My boy — than whom a nobler never blessed
A father's heart — upon him for a brother.
Methinks that's gentle.

Arth. Look where comes my friend !

How rapt in meditation !

Re-enter REVESDALE, 1 E. L. H.

Matt. (*To FELICIA.*) You'll not leave us ?

Fel. (*Observing REVESDALE closely.*) No, no ; 'tis better I
remain.

Matt. (*Laughing.*) Draw back ;
He's in a trance of deep philosophy.

(*They retire a few steps to the back, unperceived by REVESDALE.*)

Rev. Woos her in secret, does he ? Wastes no breath
To win my sanction, who should thank my luck
That my home and sister please him ! Our alliance,

'Tis true, has been held priceless ; but this broker
 In decayed honors knows that it befits
 The needy to be humble. Is't for *thee*,
 Thou climber by the clefts of others' ruin,
 My sister has forsworn her happiness,
 And balked with such soaring sand my thirsty eyes
 Of the fount before them ? Not so ; my friend Norville
 Stays at his seat in Hampshire. I'll set forth
 This hour to see him, and so gain delay
 For a wiser answer.

(MATTHEW, L. C., ARTHUR, R. C., and FELICIA, R. H., come forward.)

Matt. (L. c.) Save you, noble student !
 You've solved a knotty problem.

Rev. (L. H.) Sir, you have it.

Arth. I give you joy ! Your hand.

Rev. 'Tis not for sale.

Arth. (R. C.) For sale !

Matt. Nay, nay ! We're here
 To join hands, not deny them. Faith, my lord,
 You must clear that clouded brow. I would acquaint you
 With my heiress and my new-found daughter !

Rev. So,

Your daughter. — (Aside.) It goes smoothly !

Matt. You're amazed.

'Twill crown your wonder when I say how long
 You've known her, *you*, sir — that, in brief, she stands
 With her affianced husband there, ay, there.

(Pointing to ARTHUR, R. C., and FELICIA, on R. H.)

Go, boy, and bless them !

Rev. Ingrate that I am,
 I have no knee to thank you.

Arth. You'll not mar
 Our joy by your dissent ? It was but yesterday
 I dared to hope —

Rev. What you must hope no more !

(Restraining himself, and with formal courtesy.)

Sir, for the honor you design our house
 I thank you, and decline it.

Matt. What ! decline
 My boy ! Adversity has turned his brain.
 Decline my Arthur !

Arth. Basil, pardon me. (Crosses, c.)
 Your sister's love was her own gift. I stand,
 However humble, dignified in this —
 That she has chosen me, and girt my life
 With her bright zone of love. To yield her, then,
 Must be a pang to me — a worse than pang,
 A crime, to her. For her sake —

Rev. (Ironically.) For her sake !

Arth. Yes, for her sake, my lord. I do not boast

A storied name. Perchance mine never waved
 Embroidered on a flag, or rallied hosts
 In the shock of battle. Past our own domain
 The hind at plough may hear it and plod on,
 Nor check his careless whistle. Do you ask
 My title, then, in this ! 'Tis here — she loves me !
 Spite of all want and accident, she loves me,
 Finds love that answers hers, finds truth to lean on,
 Finds sympathies that feed her root of joy,
 And keep it verdant. If I give not these,
 I have indeed no claim ; but giving them,
 My lot grows proud. I am something to myself
 If aught to her. I'll not withdraw the faith
 She prizes, till she say, *Sir, take it back —*
I no more need it.

Fel. Never, never, Arthur,
 Can she say that ! O brother !

Matt. Stand apart,
 My boy, and let them speak. (ARTHUR and MATTHEW retire up c.)

Rev. And so you'll blight
 My future and your own for a light mood
 That dates from yesterday — a whim, a nothing !

Fel. (r. h.) A *nothing* ! All new life, that struck its fibres
 Deep down before it budded ! Nothing ! Basil,
 Earth has a thousand destinies for man ;
 For us, one — love ! Man's massive trunk puts forth
 Unnumber'd branches ; lop them, they renew ;
 But we who cling around him, severed thence,
 Are prostrate once forever.

Rev. (l. h.) Credulous girl,
 Be warned ! What Ringwood seeks in this alliance
 Is his advancement, not your love. For this,
 Unknown to me, he lured you step by step.

Fel. Your frenzy speaks !

Rev. For this, by stealth he traffics
 For our domain, as if to seize our eyry
 Made *him* the eagle — does this, and commands
 That the knowledge be kept from me !

Fel. Question him ;
 He'll explain all.

Rev. (Ironically.) To be sure he will ! And now,
 To save you and those hopes he would eclipse,
 Listen ! I'm bound for a sudden journey. Ere
 I go, decide — a suitor or a brother ?

Fel. (Seizing his hand.) You cannot mean —

Rev. Renounce him !

Fel. He has loved me, and I cannot ; I have pledged
 My love to him, and will not ; 'tis your wish
 To cast me off, not mine to lose you, brother.
 I must be true — I wed him !

(ARTHUR comes down r. h., MATTHEW on l. c.)

Rev. Free my hand!

(To ARTHUR.) Sir, till your gold gives right to unlock my gates,
You pass them not again. Release me!

Fel. (Clinging to him.) Brother!

Rev. When next we meet I see thee Norville's wife,
His wife affianced, or a stranger — strange
Thenceforth to sight, thought, love; thy name a sound,
Thy place a void, thy very memory dead!

(He breaks away from FELICIA, and rushes out, 1 E. L. H.

She sinks back into ARTHUR's arms, on R. H. C.)

Fel. Bear witness, heart, I had no choice but this!

TABLEAU.

ARTHUR, supporting FELICIA, on R. C.

MATTHEW, on L. C.

Quick Drop.

END OF ACT SECOND.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*An Oak Chamber in Revesdale Castle, 1 G. Door in centre, leading to chapel. Night—lamp on table, on R. H.*

Enter, 1 E. L. H., ALICE and RICHARD, ushering in ARTHUR RINGWOOD.

Alice. This way, your honor — this way, Master Arthur!
May it prove a joyful day, or rather night.
You're kindly welcome.

Rich. Welcome! You forget
'Tis for the young squire here to welcome us.
The castle now is his.

Alice. How thy wits wander!
Arth. What says good Alice?
Rich. Nay, she'll not believe
That you've bought Revesdale, and are lord of it.

Alice. Revesdale's the lord of Revesdale. In the time
Of my grandsire's grandsire, it had been so years
Beyond his count.

Arth. It was so then.

Alice. What then was
Must be so still. I'm grown to old too change.

Arth. Too faithful, say.

Alice. I see now why my son
Called you the lord of Revesdale. 'Tis because
You'll wed the lady of Revesdale. (To RICHARD.)

Thy poor wits
 That once wast shrewd ! 'Tis not the wife gives rank,
 But the husband. — Rest ye, gentles, for a while ;
 I'll bring my beauty to ye, my dear child —
 I'll bring the bride anon.

(Exit, C. D. R. H.)

Enter MATTHEW RINGWOOD, C. D. L. H.

Matt. The priest attends,
 And all's prepared. A word with you, friend Richard,
 On this near marriage.

Arth. His true service claims
 Full confidence. — (*To RICHARD.*) Your lady takes a husband
 In her brother's absence — nay, against his will.
 You like not that, nor I ; but reasons strong
 And just enforce it.

Rich. What my mistress does
 Must needs be right.

Arth. True ; but your lord being adverse,
 We would not use such public ceremony
 As might offend him ; therefore hold our union
 Private, as we would have it.

Rich. I'll be heedful.

(*He retires to back, and occupies himself in arranging the apartment.*)

Matt. Knows yet Felicia why we bought the castle ?

Arth. She does. I told her that, should chance restore
 Her brother's wealth, it should again be his.

Matt. A costly purchase ! Ringwood must be sold
 To stock our empty coffers. But for that,
 Its old walls had received you.

Rich. (L. H.) See, my mistress !

Enter FELICIA, in bridal attire, accompanied by ALICE, centre door, R. H.

Fel. (*To ALICE.*) Await me here. (*Advancing, c.*) An unattended bride,
 No kindred or companions to present me
 To my dear lord, I do present myself.

Arth. (R. H.) There is no herald to thy love so fit
 As its own music.

Matt. (L. H.) Bless you for his sake,
 My brave, true child !

Arth. And yet my heart, Felicia,
 Half shrinks to take its treasure. If one doubt —

Fel. (c.) There's no doubt. I have weighed
 Each point of duty. Basil, ere he went,
 Left me these written words : " By all that makes
 An oath inviolable, I'll ne'er consent
 To see you Ringwood's wife." That oath he'll keep.

His journey's to your rival's home, in hopes
His suit may shake my purpose. To await
Basil's return, what were it but to wage
A fruitless strife, and widen for no cause
Our household wounds ? In all becomes a sister
I'd drain my heart for him ; but in that love
Which holds not of our kin, but straight from Heaven,
Doth blend two souls in one — who owns *that* claim,
Must own it paramount.

Arth. O, pardon me,
If jealousy for thy pure nobleness
Makes question still. What if our union, private,
Unknown beyond these walls, yet linking us
In closest contact, draw on thee reproach
From the malignant ? What if they should say —

Matt. What *can* they say but that an honored lady
Receives two honored guests ? In a few days
Her brother will return, and all be told.

Fel. My love past doubt, I'll place beyond dispute.

Alice. (Coming forward, r. h.) Now, ladybird, the priest
Attends ; my darling's staid for.

Matt. May Heaven's grace
Bless thee, my daughter ! — 'Tis some forty years
Since, as that boy stands now, I stood with one
Gentle and fair like thee. She left me him
For my age's solace ; and I think, though friends
Are scanty here, perhaps an angel's eyes
Look on these bridals. — There ! — don't think that grief
Flows in these drops. I see the future through them,
The happy future ! — Basil reconciled,
As he must be when he knows us, a glad group
Round the old man at the hearth, and, in good time,
Perhaps upon his knees — What was I saying ?
Lean on your bridesman, girl. Now, boy, your arm
To Mistress Alice !

Arth. Alice !

Alice. Sir, that ever.

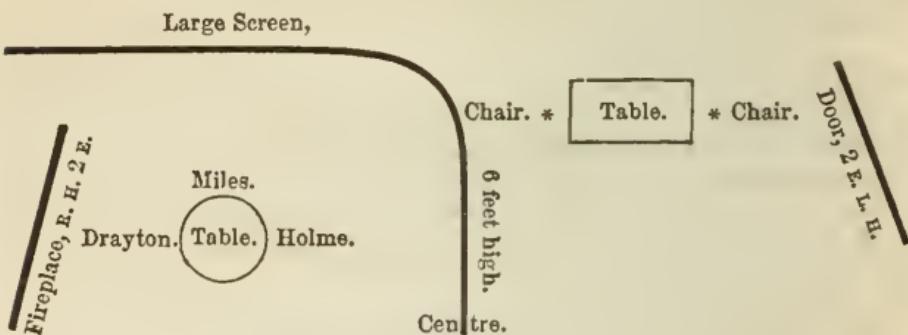
Arth. (Placing her arm in his.) I shall claim my kiss !

Alice. Ah, well-a-day !

Matt. Come, daughter !

(*Exeunt ARTHUR with ALICE, MATTHEW with FELICIA, into
the adjoining chapel, c. d. l. h. The music of an organ is
heard behind.*)

SCENE II.* — *An apartment in a roadside Hostelry, 3 G. Set fireplace, R. H. 2 E. Drayton, Miles, and Holme seated at table, R. H., before the fire. On it a bottle of wine and three wine glasses. Three chairs on R. H. A large screen behind them divides the apartment. Table and two chairs on L. Set door, 2 E. L. H.*



Dray. Alone?

Miles. (Looking behind the screen.) Not a mouse hears.

Dray. One last cup

To our patron, ere we move.

Holme. Drink deep — Success

To Russell and his mission! (All drink.)

Now or never

Is the adventure's time. The people's heart

Would leap to it.

Dray. These Dutchmen never hurry.

Miles. Fill up! Our task's done, and we've baffled Bancroft.

Holme. We're safer, being these thirty miles apart.

I liked not his close conference with Lord Revesdale.

Dray. No danger there; a Revesdale ne'er betrayed.

And my lord was in our power, having signed to treason,

Whose penalty is death.

Holme. (Refilling his glass.) So his lands are sold.

Dray. It had been gold well spent, had some we wot of

Bought Revesdale Castle. Here's the plan of 't — see!

A height commanding all the bay.

(He exhibits the plan, and, as they examine and discuss it,

REVESDALE enters unobserved, with the Landlord, door 2 E. L. H.)

Rev. Wine, host,

And a fresh horse! and quickly. I'd reach home

Ere night. (Exit Landlord, door 2 E. L. H.)

Disastrous chance, that called my friend
From his house before I reached it, and so wasted

* An interval of a day is supposed to elapse between the first and second Scenes of this Act.

My days in the vain hope of his return.

(*Landlord re-enters, door 2 E. L. H., with salver, and bottle of wine, and glass, and places them on table, L. Exit Landlord, 2 E. L. H.*)

Strangers! (*He retires to back of screen, and sits.*)

Dray. (On r. h.) Ay, Revesdale Castle's in bad hands.

Miles. (On r. h.) In upstart Ringwood's, who refused our league, Because, forsooth, the cause lacked better vouchers!

Holme. (On r. h.) How brooks the proud Lord Basil to see Ringwood

Master of Revesdale?

Miles. Soon to wed his sister.

Holme. A bridegroom who should blazon on his shield Three vats, with crest — a malt-sack!

Dray. 'Tis well Revesdale

Has been of late from home; though they were friends, He'd scarcely brooked young Ringwood's license, or This gossip on his sister. (*All laugh, amidst which they rise.*)

Miles. Faith, the pair

Should marry quickly, lest impatient Cupid

Trip Hymen up while plodding to the altar. (*Renewed laughter.*)

Dray. Come, come! The day wears down.

Holme. Have with you!

Dray. (To MILES, who refills his glass.) Sirrah!

D'ye mean to sit your horse?

Miles. (Draining the bottle.) There, there — I come!

(*Exeunt DRAYTON, MILES, and HOLME, 1 E. R. H.*)

Rev. (Coming forward.) Miles, Holme, and Drayton! my domain has passed

To Ringwood — They're from the very spot

That was our home — was for five hundred years!

They poured their gibes even on Felicia.

'Tis plain her wooing, then, is bruited far.

(*After a pause, with uncontrollable passion.*)

Would hurricanes had strewed

Earth with my towers; would that the earth, agape

To feed on pride, had gulped them! — Wed Felicia!

Our blood, that sprang from mountain heights of time,

Caught the first rays of glory, and conversed

With unstaled lightnings while the world was dark —

Had fate no blast to freeze, no torrid heat

To scorch even to its bed that stream, or e'er

It lapsed into a sluice, and turned a mill-wheel?

Well, well, well, well!

(*Drinks excitedly, and throws himself into a chair, up R. H.*)

Enter BANCROFT, door 2 E. L. H.

Ban. Those I sought not here!

Mine host is ignorant, or bribed. — (*Aside.*) How, Revesdale! He meets my very wish. That scrupulous sense

Called honor, sways him so, that in cool blood
 'Twere vain to tempt him ; but I've news will lash
 His passions into fury — fact, broad fact,
 The man whom most he hates his sister's guest,
 And by a village matron found at night
 Where no foot but a husband's should intrude.
 This, if I know my lord, shall gain my ends,
 And so arouse his pride, that, like a sea,
 In fury and unconscious, he'll cast up
 His inmost secrets. — (*Feigning surprise.*) Ah ! whom do I look on ?
 Lord Revesdale ! — 'Tis my honored lord !

Rev. (*Fiercely.*) Your will ? (*Down R. H.*)

Why mock with this feigned respect a ruined outcast ?

Ban. (*L. H.*) Because you *are* one ; I can show respect,
 And not be thought to flatter.

Rev. (*Recklessly.*) Right ! — at least
 I'm a gainer *that way* !

Ban. (*Aside.*) Wine or rage, or both
 Have fevered him. — The better ! — you've heard all ?

Rev. (*Aside.*) Peace, heart ! Thy griefs are not to prate of,
 As hawkers prate their ballads. — Yes, sir, all.

Ban. That your castle's sold ?

Rev. Ay.

Ban. And to *whom* ?

Rev. That, too.

Ban. You bear it nobly. Strangers were more loud
 In your behalf than you. No man would bid
 For your inheritance, save Arthur Ringwood.

Rev. It fell to him cheaply, then ?

Ban. This fortitude —

Though I rejoice at it — seems more than natural.
 Dull wit ! You have compounded with young Ringwood,
 Renewed your friendship ! To be sure you have !
 Well, well ! 'Twas prudent ; you had no resource
 But to yield your sister, and to trust his bounty.

Rev. You're venturous, sir !

Ban. Plague on't ! my rough, blunt way.

I might have guessed before,
 That you were reconciled, or he had not dared,
 While Revesdale yet was yours, to come there wooing,
 Against your strict command.

Rev. When I left home —

I mean, left Revesdale ?

Ban. There the next day found him,
 The next to that, the third ; at last he staid.

Rev. Staid ! where, at Revesdale, and my sister —

Ban. There,

I'm balked. If with your leave he wooed her, why
 Forget all caution in his interviews,
 And draw men's gossip on her ?

Rev. Gossip !

Ban. Well,
I'm loth to call it scandal, but the world
Will judge by what it sees.

Rev. Judge what? (BANCROFT averts his face.) Judge what?

Ban. What would you judge yourself, if a gallant,
Unwedded, sought a maiden in her home,
No father near nor brother, she alone, —
Sought her at eve, and had not left at dawn?
At least, he slept at Revesdale yesternight.

Rev. 'Neath the same roof with her?

Ban. Nay, one despatched
On an errand to your sister, unawares
Entering the boudoir which adjoins her chamber,
Found him there late.

Rev. In her chamber?

Ban. Nay, I said
The adjoining room: now though I charge no guilt —

Rev. Guilt!

Ban. You're so intemperate: I only say
'Twas indiscreet!

Rev. 'Twas indiscreet! — Ah! now
The jests those men cast on her flash upon me
In their foul sense! — Felicia, a theme
For ribald tongues, a name for reeking lips
To mouth between the drainings of a flagon,
A key-note to the chorus of such laughter
As shakes a tavern!

Ban. (Aside.) The gale whistles now!

Rev. My innocent one that in her orphanhood
Flew to my bosom dovelike; whose small hand
Our dying mother clasped in mine to guard,
And sanctified love's natural bonds at birth,
By prayers in death; my darling whom I loved
Even as my better self! O, traitor, why
Not thrust at *my* heart only? Stripped, forlorn,
And humbled, one pang more had cost me little.
But she, my sister! — There be eyes in heaven
That would forget the patience of the place,
And haunt me with reproach, if I forgave him!

Ban. 'Tis sure he failed in decent reverence to her.

Rev. Nay, had she been mere pulseless stone, she stood
Nieded in the pure tradition of our honor
To bend men's thoughts in homage; but herself,
Whose very life is purity, whose love,
Thought, grace, flow from its fount, all purity, —
To foul that stream of crystal from the urn
Of shadowing ages! — O, his star aseends
And mine dies out; but from my ashes leaps
A comet that shall cross his rising orb
With fiery potent in the midst of heaven! —
Would we were met!

Ban. Why ?

Rev. Ah, why, why ? — He seeks
To *blend* with the blood of Revesdale, not to *spill* it, —
He'd tell me so, I doubt not !

Ban. Pity 'tis
That you met ever.

Rev. (*Traversing the room impetuously, and as if speaking to himself.*)

Be that hour accursed !

Accursed the shows of genial fellowship
And truth that won me to him ! Cursed my weak
And womanish pity that, while we were strangers,
Sealed up my servants' lips that eagerly
Sought to denounce his treason !

Ban. (*Aside.*) Mad with pride,
He knows not what he utters ! — Treason ! Nay —

Rev. It perilled his head, though. — Norris, Hurst, and others
Of my following, heard it from his own confession.

Ban. (*Musing.*) Norris and Hurst ! — Some skirmish then, —
(*Approaching REVESDALE.*) I say

Some petty skirmish, then ?

Rev. (*Impatiently.*) Ay, ay, his sword
Drawn for the rebels while they fled or rallied.
I know not nor remember. I but felt
His danger and my pity.

Ban. (*Aside.*) Hurst and Norris
May have better memories ! — And he stung the heel
That raised, could crush him !

Rev. Peace !

Ban. His very life
Lying in your grasp ! — You see !

Rev. Not I !

Ban. That's strange.

He is a traitor ; you, with Hurst and Norris,
Could prove him such.

(*Laying his hand familiarly on REVESDALE's arm.*)

Rev. Off, sir ! (*Throws off BANCROFT.*) I spear the foe
That dares me with his tusk ; but I don't chase him
To pitfalls for the butcher !

Ban. Humph ! — The king
May be less precise in his hunting.

Rev. Ah ! — You would not —

Ban. A fair journey to your lordship. (*Going L. H.*)

Rev. Bancroft, stay !

Ban. Not now : you're ruffled, and you shook me off
As the bloodhound's paws had soiled you !

(*Aside.*) Hurst and Norris !

Good even, my lord ! (*Exit BANCROFT, door 2 E. L. H.*)

Rev. (*After a pause as if bewildered.*)

What have I done ? Now do I see his drift.

The villain who would tempt me thus would lie

Or color truth to dupe me. I'll pursue
 And drag him back ! But wherefore ? Could I chain
 His limbs, his tongue were free. That must be stilled
 At any cost ! (Moves to the door, 2 E. L. H.)

His horse's hoofs ! They trample
 Upon a living path — my honor ! Yes,
 I've betrayed Ringwood ! ay, *betrayed* — the sin
 Of basest cowards. Vain to say my words
 Flew from me like the unconscious sparks from iron
 That's hammered when afire : — 'twas in the furnace
 Of my own pride I let this demon heat me,
 And beat me to his shaping ! Fool, whose hand,
 Clutching the shows of nobleness, — let slip
 The very thing ! And Arthur ! — ah, why linger !
 They may be on his track, his life the game,
 And not a voice to warn !

(Seizing his hat and cloak from chair at table, L. H.)

I should have wings
 To save him ! Ah, what wing will overtake
 Those angels who have fled me, — Peace and Honor ?

(He rushes out door, 2 E. L. H.)

END OF ACT III.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—A spacious Gothic entrance hall in Revesdale Castle, 4 and 6 G. A massive staircase leading to apartments, R. H 3 G. practical. Many portraits of the Revesdale family are suspended conspicuously on the walls. Cheering and dancing music heard without, U. E. R. H. ; c. doors open, with large broad steps and platform at doors, backed by Gothic. Gothic table and chairs on R. H.

Enter GILES, RICHARD, and SERVANTS, C. D. R. H.

Giles. (R. H.) O, happy day ! — You're sure of this good news ?
 Rich. Quite sure ; my mistress had it in a letter
 From some great lord in London — Lord — Lord Norville.
 He's pleaded with the king, and made him pay
 His debts to our master.

Giles. Hurrah ! (To the rest.) D'ye hear ? Lord Basil
 Is rich again ; the good old times we knew
 Are back once more !

Servants. Brave news ! brave news !

Rich. Lord Revesdale,
 Being absent, knows not yet this happy change.
 Would he were here ! — He's to have Revesdale back.

Our young squire bought it in the hope that some chance
Like this might give it to his friend again.

Giles. He's a true friend,

Squire Arthur! (*Peasants laugh and shout without, c. d. r. h.*)

Rich. See, here comes

A holiday group. Our lady has thrown ope
The park and house for a festival in honor
Of these blithe tidings ; but the night drives in
Our merry makers.

Enter male and female Peasants, preceded by Alice, c. d. r. h.

Alice. (*Advancing from the group in great excitement.*) Now, son,
who was right ?

Said I not Revesdale still was lord of Revesdale ?

And now all say it. Strike up, lads and girls ! (*Music — a dance.*)

Giles. I could shake a leg myself.

(*Offers his arm to Alice, who, unable to control herself, joins the dance.*)

Rich. (*On l. h., near conclusion of the dance.*) Hold, hold, our lady !

(*FELICIA, MATTHEW, and ARTHUR appear on the staircase, 3
e. r. h. PEASANTS, &c., range on l. h. ALICE and GILES
on r. h.*)

Join all ! Long life to Revesdale and our lady !

Chorus. (*By the group, on l. h.*) Long live Lord Revesdale and his noble sister !

Giles. (r. h.) And his honor and Squire Arthur !

Group. Ay, long life

And joy to all !

Fel. Thanks, thanks, good friends !

Let me not check the mirth, for my heart shares it.

(*FELICIA, MATTHEW, and ARTHUR descend the staircase, r. h.,
and advance to front. All bow and courtesy, and then
retire up and stand in c., front of c. doors.*)

Matt. (*To dancers.*) Well done, well done ! Fall to again !

(*To FELICIA, c.*) I feel

So light, so gay ! I never see the young

Glad, but my old heart leaps up wild and full.

I must dance, or sing, or kiss some one, I must !

For fear of accidents, it shall be you. (*Kisses her tenderly.*)

Fel. (r. h.) Fie ! You, a veteran !

Matt. Veteran, girl ! I'm young.

True youth is like true wine — the longer kept,

The more the spirit of the grape comes out. (*Crosses to r. h.*)

Arth. (l. h.) There wants but one thing to complete our joy —
Basil's return.

Matt. How, scapegrace ! Do you feel

No awe of the man from whom you've stolen his sister ?

Fel. No danger now. The winter that congealed
His love dispelled, 'twill open all its sweets

In Fortune's sunshine. 'Tis not in his heart
To turn from your dovolution.

Matt. What delays him?
'Tis clear he's not with Norville, who despatched
The letter that restored your brother's rights,
From London.

Fel. You speak anxiously.

Matt. No, no;
There's nougnt to fear. And yet 'tis true the land
Is rife with plots.

Arth. I'm glad of it.

Matt. Silence! scarce a house
But holds a spy. Hundreds are daily seized
In the name of Order.

Arth. Order — name abused!
When shall this harassed land know order more? —
The glad obedience freemen pay the laws
That keep them free. Cruelty on the bench,
Fraud in the council, menace every where,
The heart denied its commerce with the tongue —
Can there be order? Can unscrupulous power
Strike on a nation's heartstrings with a gantlet,
And look for music?

Matt. 'Tis said all men's hopes
Are set on Holland; but the cautious prince
Resists entreaty.

Arth. Till his time be ripe. (*Laughter from the dancers at back.*)

Fel. Leave these grave themes, and list their happy laughter.

(*A pause, during which they watch the dancers.*)

Rev. (*Without, c. d. l. h.*) Way, there! My sister! Arthur!

Fel. Ah, that voice!

(*The group divides in consternation; REVESDALE rushes in, c. d. l. h.*)
My brother! (*Going to him.*)

Rev. (*R. c.*) Touch me not!
No, no embrace. Hence, Arthur, for your life!

Arth. (*c.*) Go, friends!

(*Exeunt PEASANTS, c. d. r. h., with ALICE, RICHARD, and
GILES. Doors in c. are closed.*)

Now, Basil?

Rev. (*Aside.*) He is here; in that
Bancroft spoke truth. — (*To ARTHUR.*) By what right do you
share

One home with her?

Fel. By the best right — a husband's.

My brother —

Rev. (*Aside.*) Married! That explains the slander.
Married! What depths of horror at that word
Yawn in my path! Fly, Arthur, fly!

Fel. You speak
In terror, not in wrath.

Rev. Fly!

Arth. On this night,
That hails you back to Revesdale — to *your* Revesdale !

Fel. Ay, brother, *yours*. Lord Norville from the king
Has won your rights, and Arthur holds your lands
But to restore them.

Rev. (Aside.) This for *me*,
Beyond redemption lost ! — (To ARTHUR.) Why do you stand
With that calm brow, when every moment falls
Like a sand from the glass of fate ? Fly for your life,
From hence, from England !

Matt. (R. H.) What do you mean ?

Rev. 'Tis known —

His treason, or the deed which the law calls so,
Is known. His foes are mustering, on their way,
Fleet as the wind, stanch as remorse ; there's not
To spare a second !

Arth. If suspicion's roused,
Flight would confirm it. Those who seek my life
May lie in wait at the port. 'Twere wiser far
To stay and front them.

Rev. Madness ! On my knees (kneeling to ARTHUR)
I do beseech you —

Fel. Hear him, Arthur ; yield,
My heart's beloved !

Arth. And leave thee ?

Fel. Ay, to save
Thyself, *myself*, that's wrapped in thine.

Arth. Hear me !

Fel. Hear me !
We'll fly together !

Matt. It must not be.

Arthur was right. Where are the proofs against him ?
His deed is known to none save Basil here
And his trusty servants. All's secure ; we'll face
This crisis ! — (To FELICIA.) Courage !

Rev. (Aside.) Then I must confess
My baseness ! — Arthur !

Arth. Basil, 'tis your zeal
For me provokes these fears. Ah, when most harsh,
I felt that you were still my friend at heart,
My warm, true friend !

Rev. No, listen ! If a wretch —
Ah !

(A loud knocking is heard without, c. d. l. h. REVESDALE
stands as if tranced in horror. A short interval of silence.
Knocking repeated.)

Fel. Husband !

Rev. To the library ! It opens
On the rear of the park — the private path ! Escape !

(Drawing his sword, and rushing to the door, c.)

I'll guard the door. More strength than's packed in iron
Stiffens this arm ! Hence ! there's yet time.

(Louder knocking and clamor without, c. d. l. h.)

Arth. (Seizing REVESDALE's arm.) Resist not !
Your life is perilled now.

Rev. What bliss if that
Could ransom thine ! (Struggling with ARTHUR.)

Arth. Be calm ; I must remain.

(The doors are burst open in c, and BANCROFT enters, followed
by two officers of the militia.)

Ban. (L. H.) Disarm that madman !

(Officers disarm REVESDALE, in c.)

Rev. (c.) Villain !

Ban. (L. H.) Arthur Ringwood,
I arrest you for high treason !

Matt. (R. H.) On whose charge ?

Ban. (Aside to officers.) See those men, Hurst and Norris, kept
apart,

Then stand in call ; quick ! (Exeunt two officers, c. d. l. h.)

Arth. (R. c.) Still athirst for blood !

Ban. Is it so strange in a bloodhound ? That's the name
You gave me, and, my lord, the name that crowds
Chorus with yells. When I was so baptized,
You were my sponsors. Giving me the name,
Should I not have the nature ? Know, your crime,
If proved, is death.

Matt. Say, who accuses him ?

None save you have suborned them. Ah, beware !
My boy is loved of the peasants.

Ban. No mob escort

Shall see your son to prison ; a detachment
Of the king's force is sent for in his honor.

Matt. I ask for his accuser.

Ban. Ask my lord !

Arth. Insolent scoffer !

Fel. (Crossing to REVESDALE, and speaking to him aside.) Do
not heed him, Basil.

Your anguish helps suspicion. It was night
When the fray chanced ; none recognized my husband,
Or he had been seized before.

Rev. 'Tis known !

Fel. To none

But Hurst and Norris, our old faithful followers ;
They would not act a baseness which no tongue
Could curse to the full.

Rev. There was a third — a third
Who knew !

Fel. Who ? If I have betrayed
My noble Arthur, may that solemn justice,
Which, unlike man's, looks to the heart as well
As to the act, judge him !

Rev. It does, it does !

Fel. His name ? Why droop your head ? He cannot be Your friend. You shudder ! Ah, what serpent thoughts Hiss through my brain ! Your feud with Arthur, your Close intercourse with Bancroft, now that look ! No, no — I loathe my mind for the doubt ; distraction, Not reason, prompts ! Speak, brother, speak in mercy ! This traitor's name ?

Rev. Behold him !

(*During the previous dialogue, MATTHEW, ARTHUR, and BANCROFT have approached them.*)

Arth. Whom ?

Ban. A witness to your guilt. Here, sirs !

(*He goes up the stage and calls in officers, C. D. L. H.*)

Matt. My son !

(*To FELICIA, who turns to ARTHUR.*) Away !

Thou hast no part in him ; thou art *his* sister !

Fel. No !

Arth. Father !

Matt. Forgive me, girl ! (*Extends his hand to her.*)

Arth. Basil, what brought thee

To this abasement ?

Rev. (*In a deep whisper.*) Why, my pride, that listened Unto that demon !

Fel. (*To ARTHUR.*) Speak no more ; let's meet Our fate in silence.

Arth. Wife, his wretchedness Doth outweigh ours. Look on him and have pity.

Matt. Pity ! *he* had none.

Arth. (*To REVESDALE.*) Say, how wast thou wrought To this extreme ?

Rev. I deemed by you our house

Had suffered shame. (*Exit two officers, C. D. L. H.*)

Fel. (*With bitter laughter.*) Our house !

(*ARTHUR signs to her to be silent.*) If any speak, I must. Our house ! Thy house ! Where ranks thy name In its roll of heroes ? (*Pointing to portraits.*)

See, their pictured forms

Start into life and ask thee ! Art thou heir Of him whose chivalry spared gallant foes ? — Thou didst not spare thy friend ! Of him whose counsels Quelled bloody strife 'twixt kingdoms ? Thou hast stained With blood thy hearth ! Of him whose tuneful lips Sang noble deeds ? How will this deed of thine Tell with the minstrels ? Rise, ye shapes august, And with your lips white more with scorn than death, Renounce him for your son !

Ban. Come, the king's business must be cared for now.

(*To ARTHUR.*) Those stand without, who, till the troops arrive, Will be your guard in the castle.

Arth. I am ready.

Fel. But not alone. There's yet one comfort, love —
That I can knit my fate so close with thine,
No hand shall rend them. We await our doom.
Ay, ours ! If he be guilty, I partake
His glorious crime !

Arth. Felicia !

Fel. I concealed him
Within these walls to save his life. I failed.
I triumph now, for I shall share his death !

(Casts herself on ARTHUR'S neck.)

Arth. What hast thou said ?

Ban. I would it were unspoken.
I meant not ill to her ; but for this deed
The law exacts its due.

(Goes up and waves hand. Officers enter, C. D. L. H., and stand on steps. At a sign from officers, ARTHUR and FELICIA, followed by MATTHEW, go up to the door in c., which is raised on a broad flight of stairs.)

Conduct them hence.

Rev. *(As if awaking from stupor.)* No, wretch ! I'll save them
— save —

(FELICIA, on steps, C. D., turns and looks earnestly at REVESDALE, on R. H. All go out, C. D. L. H., but REVESDALE, who stands a while dumb and motionless ; then, with a cry, falls prostrate.)

Quick Drop.

END OF ACT IV.

ACT V.

SCENE I. — *Entrance Hall in Revesdale Castle, as in Fourth Act.* REVESDALE is seated in an attitude of mental prostration, on R. H. RICHARD leans over him. BANCROFT stands apart, watching them earnestly, on L. H.

Ban. *(To RICHARD.)* He'll not answer ?

Rich. You've done your work too well ; for these two hours
Has he sat thus, more kin to death than life.

Ban. *(Aside.)* Yet he must speak ; for there be secrets still
I would worm from him. Bid the guard conduct
His sister here ; the sight of her may rouse him.

Rich. Ay, to new torture.

Ban. Better that than humor

A fatal lethargy. Go ! *(Exit RICHARD, C. D. L. H.)*
Our state secretary

Writes in reproach, (*reading from a letter,*)

“ That I have missed my clew

To traitors here, who signed the requisition
To the Prince of Orange.” Now, of these, 'tis like
One is young Ringwood. His known lenity
To Monmouth's faction, and the treasonous acts
By him committed, make suspicion strong.
Could I discover this, and his confederates
Deliver up to justice, wealth and honors
Beyond all hope were mine. By threats or wiles,
I'll wring the truth from Revesdale.

Enter FELICIA, with two officers, C. D. L. H.

So ! Retire. (*Officers retire to the door in centre.*)

A torpor on your brother hangs, pernicious
To health and life. Your voice, perchance, may wake
His slumbering sense.

Fel. (*Gazing on REVESDALE.*) So prostrate ! O, my brother,
Now that my heart is calmer, it consents
To my dear husband's pleading. Thy remorse
Tells of a soul not base, but sorely tempted.
Turn thy face hither ; 'tis thy sister, Basil, entreats thee !

Rev. (*On R. H. Vacantly.*) Who ?

Fel. Felicia.

Rev. Let no blessed shape
Visit this gulf, nor any save the one
I wait for !

Fel. (*c.*) Whom expect you ?

Rev. Go ! you're fair
And pure ; he'll not consort with such, the fiend
Who plunged me here.

Ban. (*L. H. Approaching with coarse laughter.*) He raves !

Rev. (*Crossing c., and springing upon him.*) Ah, ah ! thou'rt
come ;

I have thee in my gripe !

Ban. Let go your hold !

Madman, be warned ! release me ! Off, I say !

I'll crush thee to the earth !

Rev. Fool ! Dost thou think

My arms infold thee merely ? 'Tis my soul
That grasps its tempter ! Mighty with despair,
It twines around thee, drags thee down, down, down
To its perdition !

Ban. Off ! I choke ! What right

Have you for this ? I sought my enemy's life,
But you —

Rev. (*Pausing.*) Ay — well !

Ban. Betrayed your friend !

Rev. (*c. Releasing him and staggering back.*) Thou'rt right.
Thou hast crushed me to the earth !

Fel. (R. H.) Basil ! (BANCROFT goes up c.)

Rev. I look

On thee, yet live !

Fel. You never dreamed
Of these sad issues. 'Twas a moment's frenzy
Surprised and overcame you.

Rev. Is't to a wretch

Like me, your murderer !

Fel. Listen ! If I'm wronged,
I have a claim on thee. O, let my words
Fall in thy soul like holy seed, which time
Shall turn to fruitful duty. Live to prove
He who repents can expiate ; live to serve
Thy kind, that thou mayst say, when grateful hearts
Bless thee, I had a sister once, whose spirit
Still lives in mine. She prayed for me, she blessed me ;
With her last breath she won me from despair,
And left me what I am !

(REVEDALE interrupts her with a cry of anguish.)

Ban. (Looking off.) Ah, who comes ?

Enter OFFICER, C. D. L. H.

Well, sir,

The troops ?

Off. Are on their way. I met them with a force
More fit to take a city than a prisoner.

Ban. A wise precaution.

Off. On their heels the crowd
Followed with shouts.

Ban. And curses, doubtless.

Off. That

I know not ; I but bore your summons to their captain.
He laughed. "Your errand's stale ; we were already
Bent towards Revesdale."

Ban. (Surprised.) So !

Off. I set spurs to horse,
And thus outrode them.

(At a sign of dismissal from BANCROFT, OFFICER exit, C. D. L. H.)

Ban. Lady, you've scant time
For preparation.

Fel. Basil, one embrace !

Rev. No, no ! (Rushing up to BANCROFT.)

Bancroft, as yet the law knows not
Of their offence ; have pity — save her — save
Her husband !

Ban. What, so low ?

Rev. (Sinking on his knees.) Ay, in the dust.
Where should guilt be ? So low ! O, thou mightst tower
Above me like a god ! This prostrate thing
That's at thy knees, helpless, disgraced, and hopeless,

A word from thee can fire with hope, strength, honor.
The worm crawls ; thou canst bid it rise, a man !

Ban. There's but one chance. Let Ringwood own his share
In this petition (*showing parchment*) to the Prince of Orange,
And trust to the king's mercy.

Rev. (*Rising.*) What petition ?

Ban. That signed by traitors, urging William's presence,
Implying, if not offering, support.

Rev. (*Aside.*) The same I signed that day Felicia's prayers
Won me from the conspiracy.— He never
Set hand to that.

Ban. Then he can give no clew
To the plot. I cannot save them. Mark me ; 'tis of moment
Most vital some accomplice in that act
Should be discovered.

Rev. (*Aside.*) And my signature
To the requisition makes *me* such accomplice !

Ban. Time hurries. Officers !

Rev. Go, sister. Banerofte,
Remain !

Fel. One last embrace.

Rev. Not now — I dare not ; yet
A time may come. Go — we shall meet once more —
Once more, my sister.

(*Exit FELICIA, C. D. L. H., guarded by two officers.*)

Now ; you said detection
Of one who signed that deed was vital. Save
My sister and her husband, and I place
An accomplice in your power.

Ban. (*Aside.*) Ah ! he bids high,
If I could trust him ; yet to lose my vengeance !
Stay — I might compass both. Were Ringwood free,
The troops who are at hand might overtake him.

Rev. Your answer ! The king's force is nigh.

Ban. What ground

Have I to trust you ?

Rev. This : I have confessed
I know the traitor. If I break my word,
The peril lights on me.

Ban. It does already.

Rev. I can be silent.

Ban. (*Aside.*) True ; the prey meanwhile
May cheat me and escape. — Will this accomplice
Name his confederates ?

Rev. No.

Ban. (*Aside.*) A foolish question !
Once seized, if he prove obstinate, the rack
Will force avowal. — And within what time
Will you reveal the culprit ?

Rev. When my sister
And Ringwood are safe on shipboard.

Ban. (Aside.) I'll so plan
That ere they well spread sail they are pursued.
Should they escape, the stake will justify
My venture to the king. — I take your terms.

Rev. Quick, then — release them !

Ban. Should you fail, be sure
Your life —

Rev. Will answer it.

Ban. I go ; we meet

Straight in the court yard ; but your pledge — remember !

(Exit BANCROFT, C. D. L. H.)

Rev. He yields ; they may be rescued ! They may live
In joy, with children round them, and my life,
My worthless life, may save them. Well said, sister —
He who repents can expiate !

(Exit, C. D. L. H.)

SCENE II. — *Court Yard of the Castle, with very large centre gates in flat practical, 2 G. Set Castle door, R. H. 2 E. Set Castle door, 2 E. L. H.*

Enter BANCROFT and OFFICER, door 2 E. R. H.

Ban. Mount you the roof of the castle ; it commands
The road for miles. The instant you catch sight
Of the troops, return ; I'll speed you with instructions
To meet their leader. (Officer bows and exit, door 2 E. L. H.)
So, 'tis well contrived.

Enter REVESDALE and RICHARD, door 2 E. R. H.

Rev. She lies in the offing ?

Rich. Ay, sir.

Rev. Bound, you say,
To Holland ? Haste, good Richard ; see a boat
Straight manned by the beach, and thither summon friends
From the peasants and our people.

Rich. Think it done. (Exit RICHARD, door 2 E. L. H.)

Rev. (To BANCROFT.) The order for release —

Ban. Is given ; even now
Your sister and her husband quit the door.

Rev. They pass this way !

Ban. I've kept my share of the compact ;
Look to your own !

Rev. (Aside.) 'Twill be a last farewell,
And then these arms will no more fold a sister
So noble, so forgiving, nor this hand
Clasp his whom I so wronged, so basely wronged,
And now would ransom ! May they never know
That ransom's price !

Enter FELICIA and ARTHUR, door 2 E. R. H., preceded by four officers, followed by ALICE, GILES, and a group of domestics, who press around them.

Fel. Farewell, till happier times ! (Embracing ALICE.)
O, they will come ! Farewell, kind friends.

(FELICIA and ARTHUR, with officers, advance to centre.)

Fel. (c.) My brother !
Heaven has had mercy, and your prayers prevailed.

Rev. They did.

Arth. (R. H.) Glancing at BANCROFT, up c.) And could his heart be touched with pity ?

'Tis strange !

Rev. (L. H.) Arthur ! (Crosses to c.)

Arth. (Giving his hand.) Basil, believe no thought Of harshness lives between us.

Rev. I believe it.

My generous friend, farewell ! .

Fel. Now to thine arms !

Rev. Yes ; now I think I dare embrace thee. Bless, O, bless and pardon me ! (They embrace.)

Fel. (L. H.) From my heart's depths.
But we shall meet again ; you'll join us soon
In the new land we seek ? Promise !

Rev. (c. Very tenderly.) How like you are
To our lost mother, sweet ! That's the same look
Of anxious love she wore when we two children
Rode from the hall, and I, rash brother, urged
Your palfrey to his speed, or from the bough
Broke off the blossoming chestnut for your hat.

Fel. Ah, those old days, they'll come again ; once more
We'll be boy and girl together. (Anxiously.) Dear, we part
But for a time.

Rev. But for a time, Felicia —
But for a time.

Arth. (R. H.) Nay, there's some mystery.

(Pointing to BANCROFT.)

Basil, you stand not in his power ?

Rev. (Affecting gayety.) His power !
His power ! You stand so, lingering here ; no safety
Till you embark ! Think of your father, Arthur ;
He waits you on the beach. Farewell, farewell —
No word but that !

Arth. Basil !

Fel. My brother ! (Returning and embracing him.)

Rev. Go !

(He gently forces them off, door 2 E. L. H., officers following.)
Exeunt ALICE, GILES, and domestics, door 2 E. R. H.)

Ban. (Aside.) The troops not yet in sight !

Rev. (Watching FELICIA and ARTHUR through the door 2 E. L. H.)

The gate stands open ;
 The beach is lined with friends ; they pass the walls ;
 The living lane divides ; and yet one group
 Conceals the boat. Ah, now 'tis clear ; the pilot
 Stands at the helm ; they pause ! 'Tis to embrace
 Their father. Now her foot is on the plank,
 And Arthur follows her. The rowers bend ;
 It moves ! it moves to the wide seas ; they're saved !
 Thank God ! thank God ! (Kneeling.)

Ban. (Aside.) May storm and hidden shoal
 Wreak my full hate on Ringwood ! —
 (Suddenly, to REVEDALE.) Now your pledge !
 That traitor who subscribed the requisition —
 His name ? Where lurks he ?

Rev. Lurks ! Why should *he* lurk ?
 The caitiff in his mesh lurks spider-like,
 Who, from his very filament of life,
 Spins death for others ; cowards lurk, who gag
 Men's reason by their passions, and then strike
 A soul in fetters ; bravos lurk, sometimes
 Beneath a soldier's cloak, and, spite of all,
 The slouch betrays them. Lurk ! lurk thou ! Thy victim
 Stands in broad day and waits thee.

Ban. (R. H.) Who ?

Rev. (L. H.) Myself.

Ban. You signed that deed ?

Rev. Ay.

Ban. And you know your doom ?

Rev. 'Tis death.

Ban. I see. You think to 'scape

By naming your confederates. Well, proclaim them.

Rev. Never ! They're fled ; thou hast lost the scent. (With
scornful laughter.)

Ban. (Enraged and half drawing.) Beware !

Rev. (Touching the sword hilt.) It is a sword ; I thought to
 have seen a knife.

Ban. Mark, then ;

'Tis not your death alone impends,
 But, ere death, torture.

Rev. Torture ! Man, I've lain

Upon the rack — *remorse* ; can thine affright me ? (Crosses R. H.)

ReEnter OFFICER, door 2 E. R. H.

Ban. Well, laggard ?

Offi. Sir, the troops —

Ban. A curse reward their dallying !

Offi. Are at hand.

We had descried them

Long since but for the mist.

Ban. To your horse, and hide
Your rowels in his flank ! Haste, then !

Offi. They come,
Battalion on battalion, and the shout
Of following crowds roars like a distant sea. (*Exit, door, 2 E. L. H.*)

Ban. That's strange ! such numbers ! (*Goes to door, 2 E. L. H.*)
Ah, the boat returns,
And with its freight — Ringwood, his wife ! they land,
And bend this way. Unlooked-for chance ! fools, fools !
They're in my power at last ; for now the troops
Will bar escape !

Rev. O, fatal sight ! Baek, baek !

Ban. They're welcome. Guards !

Enter FELICIA, ARTHUR, and MATTHEW, *door, 2 E. L. H.* *Enter*
Officers, door 2 E. R. H.)

The tables turn, my lord.
Their lives and yours are at my mercy.

Arth. No !

Fel. Hold, husband ! What ! his life ?

Ban. (*In c.*) He has confessed
To a treasonous plot, and thereby bought your rescue,
But screens his guilty partners.

(*To REVESDALE, on r. h.*) Hark ! the troops.

(*Military music without, u. E. L. H.*)

Not theirs slow justice. In one hour they try,
Pronounce, despatch ! Look on that pair.

(*Points to FELICIA and ARTHUR, on l. h.*) The sun
Climbs, they bask in his light, are here. An hour
He will be in his zenith ; but where they ?
'Tis you must answer. Speak ! Your comrades' names,
Or friend and sister perish !

(*He beckons to guards, who advance towards FELICIA and ARTHUR ; they halt at a signal from BANCROFT, on l. c.*)

Rev. Wretch ! to bribe

The conscience through the heart.

(*In great agony.*) Felicia ! Arthur !

What ! must a brother doom them, or pollute
Their very lives by blood ? Off, tempter, off !
No ; I'll not buy their pure lives with dishonor.
Earth has a Judge ; I trust in Him to save them. (*Crosses to c.*)

Fel. (*Embracing him.*) O, twicee redeemed, my brother !

Matt. (*To REVESDALE.*) My son !

Ban. (*R. h. To officers.*) Away with them !

Fel. They will not stir.

Ban. How ?

Fel. (*Clinging to REVESDALE.*) Hear ! As through the mist we
ploughed the main,

A skiff crossed ours. Its pilot stayed our course,

Inquired our name and errand. These being told,
 "Return," he cried ; "no need to quit your shores ;
 Friends follow you — friends able to protect
 Or to avenge." Wouldst meet those friends ?
(Cheering without, at back.) Hark ! hark !
 The cheers of thousands greet them. *(Discharge of artillery at back.)*
 Does that sound
 Shake thee ? 'Tis but a whisper to the shout
 A nation's heart would utter — a *free* nation's !

Enter RICHARD, GILES, and ALICE, door 2 E. R. H. RETAINERS and PEASANTS rush in, 2 E. L. H., shouting.

Fling wide the gates ! See William of Nassau,
 The Prince of Orange ! *(March behind.)*

(The large gates are thrown open, and discover in the distance the fleet of WILLIAM OF ORANGE painted on flat 7 G. The Prince disembarking, the coast lined with troops and others. Three rows, set waters across from 4 G. to 7 G., level with stage. Low wall piece across in front of waters, and open in centre, with steps beneath to ascend, for procession to come up. Soldiers and Banner men on stage, 3 G., R. and L. c., grouped, and dignitaries, with staffs of office discovered ; officers are seen ascending. Renewed discharge of artillery. FELICIA throws herself into ARTHUR's arms.)

Ban. (R. H.) But the troops —

Matt. Go over to the prince. *(Crosses c.)*

(To four soldiers, who have entered, 2 E. R. H.) Secure this man.
 Wretches, by him suborned, as I shall prove,
 Have brought the innocent to timeless death.

(Soldiers seize BANCROFT.)

Matt. Off with him !

(Exeunt two soldiers with BANCROFT, door 2 E. R. H.)

Arth. How fares Basil ?

Rev. O, as one

Who, 'scaped from shipwreck, wakes, half deeming still
 The billows round him, but beholds the earth
 And the soft sky.

Matt. You wake in a new reign.

Fel. And, brother, with new hopes.

Rev. To a new life !

(FELICIA points to fleet at back. Renewed shouts and artillery. They turn to meet the prince, who is seen in centre, surrounded by his suite. Flourish and shouts.)

SOLDIERS and BANNERS, grouped.	SOLDIERS and BANNERS, grouped.
Gates open.	
OFFICERS.	OFFICERS.
PRINCE OF ORANGE.	PRINCE OF ORANGE.
OFFICERS.	OFFICERS.
DIGNITARIES.	DIGNITARIES.
ALICE.	PEASANTS.
GILES.	RETAINERS.
RICHARD.	FELICIA.
SERVANTS.	ARTHUR.
MATTHEW. REVEDALE.	L. H.
R. H.	

GRAND TABLEAU.

CURTAIN.

SPENCER'S BOSTON THEATRE.....No. CLXI.

A HARD STRUGGLE.

A Domestic Drama,

IN ONE ACT.

WRITTEN BY

WESTLAND MARSTON, Esq.,

*Author of Patrician's Daughter — Anne Blake — Strathmore — Philip of France and
Marie de Meranie — Borough Politics — Heart of the World —
A Life's Ransom — Gerald, a Dramatic Poem, etc.*

WITH

ORIGINAL CASTS, COSTUMES, AND THE WHOLE OF THE STAGE
BUSINESS, CORRECTLY MARKED AND ARRANGED, BY
MR. J. B. WRIGHT, ASSISTANT MANAGER
OF THE BOSTON THEATRE.

BOSTON:
WILLIAM V. SPENCER,
128 WASHINGTON ST. (COR. OF WATER.)

CAST OF CHARACTERS.

	<i>Lyceum, London, 1858.</i>	<i>Boston Theatre, 1858.</i>	<i>Howard Atheneum, 1858.</i>
MR. TREVOR, (a rich Farmer.)	Mr. Barrett	Mr. John Gilbert	Mr. W. J. Norton
REUBEN HOLT, (Mr. Trevor's ward.)	“ Charles Dillon	“ J. B. Flowe	“ James Bennett
FERGUS GRAHAM, (Surgeon.)	“ J. G. Shore	“ Donaldson	“ Colin Stuart
LILLIAN TREVOR, (betrothed to Reuben,)	Mrs. Charles Dillon	Mrs. H. Kirby	Miss F. Morant
AMY, (Mr. Trevor's orphan grandchild, aged 13,	Miss Conquest	Miss O. Marshall	“ A. Clark
LANDLADY OF THE OLD SWAN,	Miss Melville	Mrs. Marshall	Mrs. G. M. Davis
SUSAN, (Mr. Trevor's maid-servant.)	Miss Turtle	Miss Barnett	Miss A. Bacon

TIME OF REPRESENTATION.—One hour and fifteen minutes.

SCENE.—Partly at Mr. Trevor's house in the country; partly at an inn in the neighborhood.

COSTUMES.

MR. TREVOR.	Green cutaway coat; gilt buttons; long double-breasted buff vest; drab breeches and gaiters; gray wig; broad-brimmed hat; white neckcloth.	LILLIAN.— <i>First Dress.</i> Travelling dress.— <i>Second Dress.</i> Morning muslin.
REUBEN.	Black velvet; shooting jacket; shawl pattern vest; white cord breeches; drab leggins; high low shoes.	AMY.—Modern walking dress.
FERGUS GRAHAM	— Full suit of black; light overcoat.	LANDLADY.—Brown stuff gown; white apron; white three-cornered handkerchief; plain cap.
SUSAN.	— Servants' chintz dress.	

A HARD STRUGGLE.

SCENE I.—*Drawing Room of the Grange, 3 and 6 a. Mr. TREVOR's house; a lawn and part of the grounds are seen through the window, which opens upon a conservatory at back of stage; set doors, R. and L. 2 E.*

MR. TREVOR, reading a newspaper aloud, and pronouncing many of the words incorrectly, and with hesitation.

Mr. Trevor. “In brief, the magnificence of the late flower show at Uppingham was without par-are-lel, (parallel,) whether we regard the exquisite specimens of hor-ti-cul-tu-ral science themselves, or the unrivalled display of fashion and a-ris-tocracy congregated from all quarters of the — vi-nis-i-ty (vicinity.”) Ah, that's something like style; that's real elegant language, just to my taste! “Hor-ti-cul-tu-ral” is a capital word; so is “par-are-lel;” so is “vi-nis-i-ty.” I must make a note of 'em. (*He takes out tablets; shouts of laughter are heard, v. e. r. h., from the grounds; he looks through window.*) What's that? Reuben and Amy again! Why, I declare he's letting her chase him up and down just as if he was a child like herself! He's as much a boy as when his poor father died and left him to my care.

REUBEN bursts in through the window, c.; AMY catches him.

Amy. (Laughing.) Caught! caught! I'm out of breath, Reuben, I'm out of breath! My side aches so!

Reuben. Yes, lassie, I think that will do for one turn.

Amy. Grandpapa, it wasn't fair; he let himself be caught just to please me.

Mr. Trevor. Reuben, I'm amazed! If any of the gentry in the vi-nis-i-ty had seen you!

Reuben. What then? They would have seen me making fun for a dear little girl who wanted a playmate.

Mr. Trevor. My good fellow, this will never do. I know you've many good points. You've helped me to manage the farm excellently. There's not an acre but what's made the most of, not a shed on the estate out of repair. But really you must give up these strange concentric habits. Remember that my daughter Lilian, whom I sent to Madeira for her health, comes back to us next month.

Reuben. Ay, and well, thank God! —

Mr. Trevor. That you're engaged to her. Consider that though

I was at first a small farmer, we're now rising people, entitled to move in a super-incumbent sphere. You must get rid of your shyness, go into company, learn how to converse, sir. Look at me! I never meet with a gentlemanly word in a newspaper or pamphlet, but I instantly make a note of it, and add it to my concatenation.

Reuben. (*Cheerfully.*) Talk's not in my line, sir; I'm not glib at words.

Mr. Trevor. Don't say *glib*, there's a dear boy. You should follow gentlemanly sports — carry your rod and line, for instance.

Reuben. What! to cheat silly fishes out of their lives with mock flies?

Mr. Trevor. Pooh! Shoot, then!

Reuben. No; powder and shot have so much the best of a bird, there's no fair play in that.

Mr. Trevor. Well, you can hunt.

Reuben. Hunt! What, when poor Renard hasn't a chance; for if he gets to cover one time, he's sure to be killed the next. Hunt! Why, if it was a tiger in a jungle, and I saw death in his glaring eyes; or if it was to stalk down a desert lion — I here, he there, a strong man against a strong beast, a life against a life — why, perhaps I might take to it! But to scour after a helpless brute, doomed before he starts — no, thank you, sir; there's no sport for me where there's no danger! (*AMY steals up to REUBEN, and places her hand in his.*)

Mr. Trevor. Well, you *can* talk when you've a mind; but it's very rough, very rough! However, I must abscond now. Old Stocks wants me to take his son as groom, and I've promised him an auditory. (*He takes his hat, and goes out by window, c.*)

Amy. (*Playfully imitating Mr. Trevor.*) Promised him an auditory!

Reuben. Stop, Amy! Never mimic your grandpapa. He was your mother's father.

Amy. (*Earnestly.*) I'm very sorry. Forgive me.

Reuben. Yes, pet; but don't do it again. (*Kisses her.*)

Amy. Indeed I won't!

Reuben. That creeper's loose, Amy. (*Takes up a hammer.*) Just give me the list and the nails; we must have all tidy for aunt Lily. (*He nails up a creeper by the entrance of conservatory.*) There, it's come down! I've broken it off. Clumsy fellow! What have such hands as mine to do with flowers?

Amy. You're not clumsy, although you choose to say so. Now, Reulen, shall I tell you what you always put me in mind of?

Reuben. (*Laughing, and throwing himself into a chair.*) Why, a great furze-bush, that can touch nothing without tearing it.

Amy. You know better, sir. You're like the great elm-tree yonder; when I try to clasp its broad trunk, I say, "Elm-tree, how strong you are! — just like Reuben." And when I look up at its green leaves, and see the sun come through them, not fierce, but soft and gentle, I say, "Elm-tree, how kind you are!" — that's like Reuben again.

Reuben. Nonsense, chatterbox! (*She jumps on his knee.*)

Amy. Hush ! It's of no use playing at hide-and-seek with me. I know who's gentle and good. I know who took the poor poacher-lad for a servant, and made him honest by kindness. I know who rode twenty miles through a snow storm to get news of poor Lucy Thompson's sailor boy. I know who has been brother and father to somebody who loves him as if he were both. (*Kisses him.*)

Reuben. Silence, prater ! All that's rough about me is my own. (*In an undertone as to himself.*) If there's any thing better, it's the work of another.

Amy. (*Hearing him.*) And if she made you good, she ought to be pleased with her work. And so she will be. What joy to think that aunt Lilian's coming home — coming home well, though we thought she would die, like my own dear mother !

Reuben. Hush, hush, dear !

Amy. O, if there could be a little window before your heart, that she could see through ! For although she loves you so, still I should like her to know how very good you've grown since she went. O, if you would only talk to people, that they might know what you really are !

Reuben. They won't know by my talking, then. I leave fine speeches to folks who write plays and stories, and such like trash.

Amy. (*Drawin* from his coat pocket a rather worn volume.) And so, sir, you hide your trash there ! How often have I caught you reading it ? It's the very story aunt Lilian used to tell me. I never quite liked it, though. The people were so naughty to each other at last, though they'd been little man and wife from children, just like you and aunt Lilian. O, see ! here's the postman coming up the walk. Let me run and see what he's got.

Reuben. Off she goes, then. (*He kisses her ; Amy runs out, c. d. l. n. ; he takes up the book, and gazes on the title page.*) *Lilian Trevor !* — Her own dear name, written by herself — so light, so delicate, it seems like looking at her. I wonder at times that she could ever love a coarse, awkward fellow like me. I suppose it was being used to me. We lived in this house together when we wore pin-afores. To think that next month she'll be here !

Amy. (*Bursting into the room, c. d. l. n., with a letter.*) It's for you ; guess from whom. It ought to have been here before. See, it's marked "too late !" (*REUBEN takes the letter, and remains looking at the address.*)

Amy. (*Capping her hands impatiently.*) Do open it, there's a dear !

Reuben. From her ! why, she ought now to be at sea. If it should be to say that she's not coming — that she's again ill ! (*He compares the direction with the handwriting in the book.*) See how trembling the handwriting looks beside this. She is ill ! (*He opens the letter with an effort, and reads.*)

" Southampton, Tuesday.

" My very dear Reuben : — This date will surprise you ; I myself can hardly believe that I am once more in England. I met with an unlooked-for chance of leaving Madeira ; and I know that neither my dear

father, yourself, nor my little Amy will be sorry to see me sooner than you expected.

"I am a little tired with my journey ; but do not suppose I am ill. To-morrow I take the rail home, and shall be with you by noon. God bless you all.

Your ever affectionate

LILIAN TREVOR."

What can it mean? *Southampton!* — *Tuesday!* — the words ring like bells in my ears ; but I can't catch the sense. (*Glancing again over the letter.*) *Southampton!* — *Tuesday!* — an unlooked-for chance of leaving *Madeira!* — the rail home ! — be with you by noon ! (*He stands silent ; then turns suddenly, and catches AMY's arm.*) This is you, Amy ?

Amy. Of course it is, dear. How happy we shall be !

Reuben. That's right. I ask ; you answer. There's the hammer on the floor, and the list I was nailing round the plants. It's all real ! And so she's — (Pausing.)

Amy. Coming home.

Reuben. When ?

Amy. She wrote on *Tuesday* — *yesterday*. Why, it must be to-day !

Reuben. Coming home to-day ! Bless you for saying it ! I know it now ; but till you said so I couldn't take it in. And by noon ! (*Looks at the letter, then at his watch.*) Why, it's near noon already.

Amy. Well, let's tell grandpapa, and go to the station to meet her.

Reuben. Yes, yes. Let me tell him, though. Run and get your hat. (*Exit AMY, D. L. H. 2 E.*) At noon to-day ! O, shame on me ; I'm almost afraid to see her ! It will be the old tale when she comes back ; I shan't have a word to say for myself.

Enter MR. TREVOR, with a letter, C. D. R. H.

Mr. Trevor. Reuben, I must beg your attention. I've just received a most consequential letter.

Reuben. So have I, sir.

Mr. Trevor. We'll talk of yours by and by. Mine is about the family pedagogue, and therefore the most important.

Reuben. Ha, ha ! You think so ?

Mr. Trevor. Yes ; it's on matters connected with our family.

Reuben. So is mine.

Mr. Trevor. Reuben, I mean the old family tree.

Reuben. Well, I mean a branch of it.

Mr. Trevor. Indeed ; I've distinct information as to two of my missing pro—pro— What's the word ? (*Refers to the letter.*) O, about two of my missing progenitors.

Reuben. And I've distinct information as to one of your missing progeny.

Mr. Trevor. Progenitors, sir ; they write it so at the *Heralds' College*.

Reuben. Confound the Heralds' College! Forgive me, sir; I speak of the living, not of the dead.

Mr. Trevor. Calm yourself; a gentleman should never be incitable.

Reuben. A man may be, though. Mr. Trevor, father, — ay, let me say father, — she's coming; she's in England.

Mr. Trevor. She! Who?

Reuben. Read — read! (*He thrusts LILIAN's letter into MR. TREVOR's hand.*)

Mr. Trevor. (*Reading.*) What, from Lilian! Lilian back again, at noon! Why, that means noon to-day. What, my own precious girl! Thou'rt right, lad; thy news was best; worth a bushel of mine. Hang the Heralds' College! (*Casts his own letter away, slaps REUBEN heartily on the shoulder.*) Come, look alive; let's be off to the station! Thou can ride the bay cob, and I'll drive the mare. Dang it, come along, come along! I'm not safe i' the house, I tell thee; I shall go up to the ceiling like a champagne cork. (*Whirling REUBEN to the window.*)

Reuben. (*Laughing.*) O, but you know a gentleman's never excited.

Mr. Trevor. Why, here's Amy ready.

Enter AMY, attired for a drive, D. L. H. 2 E.

And what do I see? Why, Reuben, we're too late! Here comes a fly bowling up the drive — a fly with luggage on the roof.

Reuben. (*Retreating a few steps.*) So soon!

Mr. Trevor. Why, man, what art thou skulking to the rear for in that way? Come out and welcome her. Hark! the fly's stopped. Lily, my own Lily! (*He rushes out. C. D. L. H.*)

Amy. Come, Reuben. (*Attempts to drag him out.*)

Reuben. Leave me to myself a bit.

Amy. No, I shan't.

ReEnter MR. TREVOR, with LILIAN, C. D. L. H.

Mr. Trevor. Here she is, here she is, blessings on her! (*Embracing her.*)

Lilian. Dear, dear father! Renben! (*REUBEN takes her hand between both of his and kisses it.*)

Mr. Trevor. Her lips, her lips, boy! Thou won't?

Lilian. Then Amy must give me a double one.

Amy. That she will, dear aunt Lily. Now I'm mistress; sit down. (*She takes LILIAN's shawl and bonnet.*)

Reuben. (*Placing a footstool.*) And thou'rt well — quite well, Lilian?

Mr. Trevor. Well! to be sure she is. Now, if we only had her brother back from America.

Lilian. What news of Fred?

Mr. Trevor. All right and hearty. Fred will be here by winter. But I did expect, lass, thou would have brought back a pair of rosier cheeks.

Lilian. (After a short pause, and speaking with sudden animation.) Rosy cheeks, indeed! What does my father take me for, Amy? What does he expect of a young lady after a long sea voyage, a night made sleepless by the thought of seeing you all, and eighty miles travelling by express? Isn't it hard, that when I thought to surprise him by my strength, he should scold me for not blooming like a peony? (She rises, seizes Mr. TREVOR's hands, and playfully swings them together; then turns to REUBEN with a sort of impetuous gayety.) And what do you think of me, Reuben?

Reuben. What do I think of you? Why, you must know pretty well by this time. No; perhaps you don't; (getting confused) that is, nobody knows — I mean — pshaw!

Mr. Trevor. Well, and our kind friends at Madeira, who took charge of thee — the Maxwells? Thou left 'em all tidy, eh? And the young surgeon, Fergus Graham, who attended thee on the passage out, when thou caught the fever with the rest. A brave fellow that; he seems to have cared neither for his sleep nor his life.

Reuben. Ay, tell us of Fergus Graham. (LILIAN sinks into a chair.)

Mr. Trevor. Why, what ails thee?

Reuben. (Alarmed.) Lilian!

Lilian. (Rallying, with a forced laugh.) You make me quite ashamed. It was but a thought.

Mr. Trevor. Ay, of her past danger. What an old fool I was to put her in mind of it! Why, Amy, we're all forgetting that your aunty's nearly famished. Run and order luncheon.

(Exit AMY, D. L. H. 2 E.)

Lilian. No — indeed I'm not hungry; only a little tired.

Mr. Trevor. Come, then, Reuben; let's leave her to herself for half an hour. She'll have her little knick-knacks to settle, and such like. (With a return to his pompous manner.) Remain here, love, while I send your maid to conduct you to your own apartment. She's an excellent, well-meaning sort of young woman; but I mean to engage for you a regular ed-u-cated French feminine-de-chamber straight from Paris — a Frenchwoman who talks French. By-by, love — by-by, love. (Kisses his hand to her, and exit, D. R. H. 2 E.)

Reuben. Don't tire yourself, Lilian — please don't. Don't come down to lunch if it's too much for you.

Lilian. Thoughtful for me as ever, dear Reuben. (She holds out her hand; REUBEN again kisses it.)

Reuben. (Aside.) I'm not good enough for her — I know I'm not.

(He hastily follows Mr. TREVOR out, D. R. H. 2 E.)

Lilian. (Who looks fixedly after them, then catches at a chair as if for support.) They are gone — gone at last! O that I should ever feel it a relief for my father, for Reuben, to leave me, so good, so loving as they are! (A pause.) O, if I could be already old and torpid! If the hours would but pass over me as over you dial, that tells, but does not feel, the flight of time! Or if my own mother had lived, and I could have told her my struggle! O, shame, shame! Is this my firmness? Let me reflect that I am Reuben's betrothed — that I became so by my own will — that I had strength to fly from

those fatal shores while there was yet time. Yes, Heaven help me, and I shall conquer.

Enter SUSAN, C. D. L. H.

Susan. A gentleman has called, ma'am. I think he be a stranger in these parts; but he's very pressing to see you.

Lilian. Indeed!

Susan. It's most likely some one from the railway station; for all your luggage arn't up yet, and he asked particler if you was come home.

Lilian. I dare say you're right. Let him come in.

Susan. Yes, ma'am. (*Exit, C. D. L. H., and immediately returns.*) The gentleman, ma'am. (*Exit, C. D. L. H.*)

Enter FERGUS GRAHAM, C. D. L. H.

Fergus. An old friend.

Lilian. Fergus! Mr. Graham!

Fergus. My presence here is indeed sudden, perhaps abrupt, dear Miss Trevor; but let me hope not quite unwelcome. (*Taking her hand.*)

Lilian. (*Commanding herself.*) A friend to whom I owe so much can never be unwelcome. (*She motions him to a chair, and takes one herself.*) But I was, as you may judge, unprepared for this pleasure.

Fergus. It was only a few days since that I learned in Paris of your sudden departure from Madeira. I had looked forward, as you know, to find you still there on my return. Hearing that you had by this time probably reached England, I could not resist the impulse to see you — to see you in your home.

Lilian. It was a kind and friendly impulse.

Fergus. Friendly! Yes. And yet that word poorly describes it. Friendly applies to acts that consult the happiness of another; mine involved my own — all, all, *Lilian*, that I have at stake in life.

Lilian. Nay, life has so many stakes, at least for men.

Fergus. (*Drawing his chair towards her.*) Can you misinterpret me? You know that in Madeira I was privileged to enter the house where you dwelt as if I had been of the family. You have not forgotten those morning walks, when our common love of nature was a tie between us; when I bent over you as you sketched some bold headland, or caught some rare effect of sea and sky; or the nights when you were my scholar, and we read together some poet of our dear England, or some lay of Italy?

Lilian. No, Fergus, I have not forgotten how kindly you taught me — how you enriched the life that you had first saved.

Fergus. Our tastes were one, our sympathies one. At times I dared to hope our hearts also. Yet I trembled to speak. Then business called me from Madeira to France. She shall know all, I thought, on my return. You quitted Madeira suddenly. When I heard of it, heard that you might already be in England, I left Paris at once. And now I am here — here to say — ah, do you not divine what? *Lilian*, I love you!

Lilian. Fergus, you have spoken ! I have ever, must ever, honor and value you ; but those words part us.

Fergus. Part us ! Has hope, then, so deceived me ? May not a time come ?

Lilian. Never ! If, indeed, you care for me, leave — leave me at once.

Fergus. Pause, Lilian ; those brief words of yours strike at a life's dream. Weigh them well. If it must be, I accept my fate. You do not, then, cannot love me ?

Lilian. (Rising.) Go ! go ! I — can never — be yours.

Fergus. Beeause you do not love me ? (A pause.) Ah, you do not say that !

Lilian. Leave me, I say, at once, unless you would bring a curse upon the life that you preserved.

Fergus. One word first. You tremble ; this vehemence is not indifference. Say either that you cannot love me, or if there be any barrier that you may not yet speak of, — one that time, however long, may remove, — tell me, and I will wait — wait even till years have blanched my hair and sapped my strength, changed me in all except what cannot change, my abiding, quenchless love. (He throws himself at her feet, and seizes her hand. *Here AMY appears at the entrance of the conservatory, c.*)

Lilian. (Almost fiercely.) Begone, sir ! I am not at confession. When a woman does not admit her love, I presume that she denies it. Release my hand ! leave me, I command you ! (Breaking away from him. *AMY retires, c.*)

Fergus. (Rising, and speaking with mournful dignity.) I obey you. You have spoken now. The friend, Lilian, may still think of you, though the lover dares not. Bless you ! (Aside, as she stands with her face averted.) What ! not even a look ? Farewell ! farewell ! (He takes up a light travelling coat, and goes out slowly, c. d. l. n.)

Lilian. He goes — goes without one kind word ! Repulsed so fiercely, how heartless must he think me ! He will return to the scenes where we were happy friends. We shall meet no more. That might be borne — should be. But that I should never cross his memory except as an image of pain and ingratititude, that I should lose all place in his esteem — O, 'tis bitter — bitter ! He will never know what I stifle here. Years will roll on, death will come, and even then he will never — never — (she totters, and is on the point of falling.)

Enter REUBEN by the window, c. With a cry she throws herself into his arms.

Reuben. Lilian ! dear Lilian ! Why, what is this ? Speak to me, my own, my darling ! She has fainted ; she must have air. Help ! help ! (He bears her out, c. d. r. h.)

Enter MR. TREVOR, D. R. H. 2 E., meeting AMY, who emerges from the conservatory, c.

Mr. Trevor. What cry was that? It threw me into a state of positive conjuration!

Amy. Don't be frightened, grandpapa. I hope aunty will soon be better.

Mr. Trevor. Better!

Amy. Something happened to vex her. I saw it by chance, and —

Mr. Trevor. Where is she? Where is Reuben?

Amy. With her; he took her into the garden. O, pray don't go, dear grandpapa; the sight of you might be too much for her.

Mr. Trevor. Why, how you cling to me, child! and you're shaking like a leaf. What has happened?

Amy. O, nothing very bad; nothing that I quite understand.

Mr. Trevor. What did you see?

Amy. Aunt Lilian will tell you; but not now, dear grandpapa; don't ask her now.

Mr. Trevor. You'll drive me out of my senses. Let me go!

Amy. Nay, look; here is Reuben!

Re-enter REUBEN, C. D. L. H.

Reuben. Lilian's better now, sir; the air did her good. I left her with Susan, who will take her to her room. She begged me to tell you that she was but over-tired, and should soon be herself.

Mr. Trevor. That's well. She's had enough to overset her. But Amy spoke of some accident. What did you see, Amy?

Amy. It was so strange! I'm afraid to say.

Reuben. (Patting her head encouragingly.) Amy will tell me, if she ever loved Reuben.

Amy. Then I think aunty has had a fright.

Reuben. A fright!

Amy. I was in the conservatory, and had pulled a nosegay for her. I was just coming into the room, when —

Reuben. Yes; go on, love.

Amy. I saw a gentleman, a stranger. Aunt Lilian was ordering him to leave the house; so I suppose he had done something wrong.

Reuben. (Repressing MR. TREVOR, who attempted to speak.) So — well?

Amy. But he wouldn't go — not then. He threw himself on his knees, and grasped her hand — O, so tight! I suppose it was that that hurt her. I went back again, for I didn't like her to see me; but I just saw her look very angry, and tear herself away from him. She again ordered him to leave her, and spoke so! — O, I never heard her angry before. Then I heard him go up the walk, and your voice, Reuben, and what you said when you came in; and that's all that I know.

Reuben. He dared to insult her?

Amy. I'm afraid so; else, why did she speak so loud?

Mr. Trevor. The pertinacious rascal !

Reuben. Leave him to me, sir. This man, Amy ; what did he look like ?

Amy. Why, like a young man. He didn't *look* wicked, though I'm afraid he was.

Reuben. Young, you say ?

Amy. Yes.

Reuben. What height ?

Amy. About yours, but slenderer.

Reuben. What did he wear ?

Amy. Nothing particular. O, I saw his light overcoat on a chair.

Reuben. The very man I met in the avenue ; he had such a coat on his arm. That's enough ! (*Seizes his hat and riding whip.*)

Amy. Stay, Reuben ! You'll not hurt him ?

Reuben. Let me but catch him.

Amy. (*Intercepting him*) You know how often, when I was naughty, you said, "Treat her gently, and she'll meid." Ah, treat him gently ! Besides, Aunt Lilian's better.

Reuben. (*Muttering to himself.*) He dared to insult her !

Mr. Trevor. (*Seizing REUBEN's arm.*) Yes ; Lilian's better. Don't thrash him, Reuben ; that's low. What if he should be one of those dashing young sparks from London, on a visit in the neighborhood ? If so, you might call him out, my boy. A duel would set the family on its legs. It's perfectly gentlemanly, quite illegitimate, and not at all dangerous.

Reuben. (*Disregarding him.*) He turned to the right. He would get out through the copse by the oat-field into the Uppingham road. Ay, that's the scent ; now for the chase ! (*He breaks from MR. TREVOR, and darts out, full speed, c. d. l. h.*)

Mr. Trevor. (*Disconsolately.*) Come, Amy ! Let's hear Susan's news of your aunt. (*To himself.*) As for that boy, he has no grand sentiments ; he suffers from a complete vac—vaccination of gentlemanly ideas, and will do nothing to extirpate the family honor ! But he has a good heart — a good heart ; so I suppose I must be intolerable to him. Come, Amy ! (*He leads her out at door, r. h. 2 e.*)

SCENE II.—*Room in the Old Swan at Uppingham, 1 g. Set door l. h. 1 e. The open bay window looks upon the road.*

Enter FERGUS GRAHAM and LANDLADY, d. l. h. 1 e.

Fergus. That will do, landlady ; that will do. Have the goodness to order the fly at once.

Landlady. (*Aside.*) Why, he don't ask after his change ; and there's two shillings back out of his half-sovereign for the fly. I wonder whether its good. (*Testing the half-sovereign.*) Yes, it is. Your change, sir.

Fergus. Give it to your servant, my good woman ; but do order the fly.

Landlady. Why, you'll be at the station an hour before the train, sir.

Fergus. No matter. I wish to start at once.

Landlady. (Nettled.) O, of course, sir, if you prefer the station waiting room to the parlor of the Swan. Every gentleman has a right to his taste. (Exit, r. ii. 1 E.)

Fergus. (Walking up and down.) Motion! Action! I cannot bear to think. If it had only been that I mistook her feelings, and that she refused me, why, that would have been a shock; but I could have endured it. I could still have honored her, trusted in her. But to be ordered from her presence so disdainfully,—even fiercely,—as if the best homage of my heart were an insult to her! (A pause.) And yet, she once so gentle—so fearful of giving pain! Is it possible that she can be so utterly transformed? Was it indeed disdain, or was it misery, that I read in her face? What if there should be some dark mystery over her fate that she dares not even hint at? I would believe that—any thing—rather than that she could be capricious and cruel. (Walking to the window, l. r., he observes REUBEN without, gazing on him with a stern and fixed expression.) Who's that? (After a pause REUBEN moves away.) That man's face quite riveted me. (He turns, and perceives REUBEN, who stands, with a menacing look, at the door of the apartment, l. h. 1 E., then locks it, takes the key, and walking steadily up to the table, confronts FERGUS in silence.—After a pause, with haughty calmness.) You mistake a house of public entertainment for your private dwelling. Why have you locked that door?

Reuben. (Speaking in a deep whisper.) That you may not go out without my leave.

Fergus. (Aside.) The man must be insane. I'll deal with him firmly, but quietly. My friend, I must trouble you for that key.

Reuben. Not yet. You're the young man who left Mr. Trevor's house a while back?

Fergus. The same, sir.

Reuben. You own it—the coward, who broke into a lady's presence, insulted her, shocked her by his violence!

Fergus. Have a care. At first, I thought you a madman, and you have been safe; but there is coherence even in your falsehood. Do you dare—

Reuben. (Breaking in.) Do you dare—you who stole in upon a woman alone, who laid hands on her till her cries of anger and fear were heard! Is it for you to say—dare?

Fergus. What do you mean?

Reuben. (Brandishing his whip.) Mean! To give you a lesson.

Fergus. Stand back! stand back! or you shall rue to your last hour that you ever raised your hand to Fergus Graham.

Reuben. (Who drops the horsewhip and stands arrested.) Who? who? Fergus—Fergus Graham?

Fergus. Leave the room.

Reuben. (Going to the door, unlocking it, and returning.) Stay! you're not—not the young doctor who saved Lilian's life at sea?

Fergus. My name is Fergus Graham; you should have asked it before.

Reuben. Sir, I humbly, humbly entreat your pardon. You could

not have insulted her. Yet she fainted in my arms as you went. How came that?

Fergus. By what right do you ask?

Reuben. By the right of one who has been bred up under the same roof with her; her playmate in childhood, her protector now—one who has the right of a brother.

Fergus. Her brother! She has often spoken of you; but I thought you were abroad.

Reuben. No, no; you mistake. I'm not Fred.

Fergus. (*Consciously*) Pardon me. I was not aware that Miss Trevor had a second brother.

Reuben. (*Aside, half-amused.*) Why, I can't blab my heart's secrets to a stranger, and say—I'm her *brother*. Let him call me what he likes.

Fergus. Be seated, sir. And so she complained to you of my intrusion?

Reuben. She—O, never! But she was heard bidding you from the house. You were seen to force her hand.

Fergus. To take it. I will be frank with you. I sought your sister's hand for my own. Heaven knows with what reverence.

Reuben. (*Aside.*) He loved her, then—he loved her! Poor fellow, how could he help it?—Mr. Graham, I feel for you. Take my hand—that is, if you can really forgive me.

Fergus. (*Shaking his hand warmly.*) Freely.

Reuben. Yet I can't make it out. There could be no offence in an offer like yours. Yet why did she bid you begone? why sink fainting into my arms?

Fergus. Did it cost her so much, then? (*Moves his chair nearer to Reuben's, and continues in a low, earnest voice.*) Do not think me presumptuous; but I have dared to think—

Reuben. (*Authoritatively.*) Stop! I'll hear no more. I've no right to—

Fergus. (*Persisting.*) To think that, after all, Lilian may still love me.

Reuben. (*Compassionately.*) No, my dear fellow, you mustn't think that; you mu-tin't, indeed.

Fergus. I will never breathe that hope without warrant; but still—

Reuben. No more, I beg. Sure, Lilian refused you?

Fergus. Ay, but her agitation; her trembling form; her look of wretchedness, that I at first took for anger—

Reuben. Again, I say, I've no right to your secrets.

Fergus. Nay, you shall hear me. What if there should be some mystery?

Reuben. (*Lying his hand soothingly on GRAHAM's shoulder.*) You mustn't give way to this. What mystery can there be?

Fergus. Fathers, before now, have forced children to marry against their will.

Reuben. Ah, that's not her case.

Fergus. Or there have been—forgive the hope that would clutch at a straw—there have been such things as childish engagements,—

engagements made before the young heart knew what love meant; yet which a cruel, a false honor bound it to keep. Ah, that's a bitter wrong to both!

Reuben. (Sharply.) What's that to do with Lilian?

Fergus. I can't say; very likely nothing. But she had lived long in retirement. It was only in Madeira — she told me so — that she first seemed to live. It is not only for myself I care. Put me out of the question; but, O, if any chance should bind her to one who could not understand her refined, gentle nature, — to one with whom she would suffer, die uncomplainingly!

Reuben. Silence, man! What d'ye take us for, us rough country folk? We mayn't know much of looks; we may be out of place in drawing-rooms, — we wi' the sun's tan on our faces, and the ploughed land on our heels; but when joy comes, — when grief comes, — we've hearts that bound or burst. We've that which makes man man, — love to God and each other!

Fergus. Right, right. I was selfish and unjust. You must forgive now.

Reuben. Enough, enough! I don't care for soft phrases. (Walks away, seizes his gloves, and confusedly attempts to draw the left one on his right hand; then speaks aside.) What if I should seem a mere rude loon to her, now she's seen the world and fine people! O, no, no!

Fergus. I have one more request —

Reuben. Whist, whist; my head's too full for talk. (Aside.) I uttered his name this morning; she turned ashy pale. I thought she would have dropped. Why was that?

Fergus. (Looking at his watch.) I've but a short time now.

Reuben. (Still aside.) Delt that I am! She was overdone by seeing us. What mere natural? (Turning cheerfully to FERGUS.) I tell you what, Mr. Graham, you must forget this folly. Work hard; root it out. Come back to us in a year or so. Who knows but she'll be married then, and you'll meet her as her friend, — her husband's friend? We'll mount you well, give you a morning gallop over hill and moor, find you a seat at night by the winter fire. We shall be as merry as the day's long. Come, come; you'll forget all else!

Fergus. If she forgets. Yet —

Reuben. (Again walking away, and aside.) If! He doubts it still. And I, — do I doubt too? How, if it should be true? What did she tell him? That till she got to Madeira she had never lived. What threw her into that state when he left her? It couldn't be hate. He was her dear friend, — saved her life. If not hate, what was it, then? (Walks a step or two, then resumes.) Suppose she had gone in love with him, and felt bound by duty to me — ah, that would explain it!

Fergus. (Approaching him.) One parting word.

Reuben. (Fiercely.) You've said too much! You've put a thought into my heart that burns and rankles; and, when I would tug it out, it goes deeper and deeper!

Fergus. I?

Reuben. You!

Fergus. I am sorry to part with you so. (REUBEN waves him off; FERGUS silently takes up his travelling coat.)

Reub.n. (Suddenly seizing his arm.) Stay! You said there was some mystery here. You shall not go till it's cleared up. I will know why Lilian bade you from the house.

Fergus. (With quiet dignity.) Remove your hand! I shall not shrink from inquiry. I will change my plans, and wait your return here.

Reuben. You will go back with me?

Fergus. If you wish it.

Reuben. I will speak to her first alone. If I find — your fly's at the door. You had better go and countermand it.

Fergus. I will do so. (Exit, D. L. H. 1 E.)

Reuben. He's deceived himself. Yes, yes; all will be well! But — but — (he stops short, greatly agitated) — I won't be mastered! I will look it in the face! But if not — if not — why, then I shall have cut out doubt forever from my heart. (Rushes out, D. L. H. 1 E.)

SCENE III. — Drawing Room in MR. TREVOR'S House, 3 and 6 G.
Same as first scene.

Enter MR. TREVOR and LILIAN, D. R. H. 2 E.

Mr. Trevor. But thou shouldn't have come down, Lily; thou really shouldn't.

Lilian. Indeed, dear father, I am better. — (Aside.) O for strength for one brave effort! (He places a chair for her.)

Mr. Trevor. Well, thou must get up thy good looks, dear; for thou'l be queen of the neighborhood, now thou'rt back again. (Sitting by her.) Thou knows thy promise that thou'l never leave thy father, even when thou'rt married. It's mostly for thy sake that I've tried to raise the family, I gave a breakfast last winter to the members of the Roxbury Hunt. Sir Richard was here himself, and I never saw a man so abstemious. He devoured every thing that came within his reach. He grew quite urbane, and showed, in fact, the greatest animosity. "Dam'me, you're a trump, Trevor!" says he; and he positively slapped me on the back! (With great complacency.)

Lilian. (Forcing a show of interest.) And did he ask you to Roxbury, dear father?

Mr. Trevor. Why, not in so many words. But the truth is, all was confusion. He had a great conflux of the aristocracy at his house that winter, and — hem — in fact — I believe there was no beds. But he's coming from London soon, and then —

Lilian. Indeed, dear father, I desire no grand acquaintance. Your Lily's content with you and with dear, dear Reuben.

Mr. Trevor. Ay, ay! Reuben's a good lad, though he wants polishing up. Anyhow, he deserves well of Lily. You should have seen how he rushed off to punish the fellow whose impertinence alarmed you —

Lilian. (Starting up.) Punish! Whom?

Mr. Trevor. Why, the person who obtruded on you this morning.

Lilian. (Excitedly.) You are jesting! O, say that you are jesting! Send after them! part them — part them, as you value my peace — my life!

Mr. Trevor. (Soothingly.) Nay, here comes Reuben to speak for himself.

REUBEN, *his eyes fixed on the ground*, is seen approaching the open window, c.

Lilian. (Darting towards the window.) Speak before you enter! Is he safe? You have not —

Reuben. (Coming in.) Not hurt a hair of his head. (LILIAN throws her arms round her father.)

Enter AMY.

Mr. Trevor. (To her.) There, I told thee all would be well. Sit down, love; sit down. (He leads her apart to a couch.)

Reuben. (Aside.) Is he safe? She asked but for him. Well, she would see that I was safe. There was no need to ask about me.

Amy. Do speak to me, Reuben. If you could guess how glad I am to have you again — to know that you've not done wrong!

Reuben. (Takes a chair, places her on his knee, and gazes earnestly into her face.) Amy, I've a question for you. (She regards him with wondering attention.) Suppose, Amy, some one was to steal your love from me?

Amy. Reuben!

Reuben. I say, suppose so?

Amy. (Trembling.) O, what have I done? You know that could never be — never!

Reuben. Well, let's put it another way. Suppose any one was to steal my love from you?

Amy. O, don't! don't!

Reuben. Nay, it's not likely; but suppose I was to choose another pet — to find some other little face that would make me happier to look on than my Amy's?

Amy. That made you happier!

Reuben. Suppose so.

Amy. If it did make you happier —

Reuben. Well, go on, darling.

Amy. O, that would hurt me; but — but —

Reuben. Yes, yes!

Amy. (Stifling her sobs.) I should pray to God; I should try to think how good you had been to me, how you ought to be happy. And if — if another pet made you so, I should give you up, and try — to love her for your sake. (She weeps silently, and covers her face with her hands.)

Reuben. (Kissing her fervently.) God bless you, darling! No fear! no fear! Now go play; I must have some talk with aunt Lily. (Leads her to the door; AMY goes out, c. d. l. h.; REUBEN then

approaches LILIAN.) Are you well enough, Lilian, to have a short talk with me alone?

Mr. Trevor. (Sharply.) No, she's not. (Comes up to REUBEN, and speaks to him apart.) Forgive me, Reuben; but she's really ill. For all she's so kind and does her best, it's plain she takes no interest in any thing.

Lilian. (Rising, and coming to them.) Father, I am well enough to talk with Reuben. I wish it; I must.

Mr. Trevor. Well, thou knows best, Lily; but I maun't have thee overset or flurried. — (Aside.) She droops just as she did before she went abroad. And such grand things as I was planning for her! Ah, perhaps that's it. I've been proud and foolish. What if this should be for — for a puni-hment! — (To REUBEN.) Be very tender of her. She's all that reminds me of her mother! (Exit, c. d. l. h.)

Lilian. Now, Reuben, you must tell me all. There has been no quarrel?

Reuben. No, Lilian; rest content about that. But you mustn't stand, (he places a chair and footstool for her,) there's a breeze getting up. (Envelops her in her shawl; then seats himself by her side.) Lily, I've something to say to you.

Lilian. Yes, Reuben.

Reuben. There have been a good many changes in this year and more since you left us. You're changed a bit yourself. The girl's look is gone from you, Lily.

Lilian. Yes; I'm a woman.

Reuben. We're always changing, I suppose. The games we played at when children don't amuse us now. Our tastes change; our likings change.

Lilian. As we grow older.

Reuben. It's what we must look for. You wouldn't wonder, then, if I was changed, too?

Lilian. (After a pause.) You would never change from being good. (Gives him her hand.)

Reuben. Do you know I've often thought of that book you were so fond of? (Draws forth the book produced in first scene, and shows it to her.) I often think of those young folks in the story who were engaged to each other, like you and me. Don't tremble so, or I can't go on.

Lilian. (In a whisper.) What about them?

Reuben. Well, you see, they didn't know their own minds until they got separated. Then they both found that what they thought love, was — a mistake.

Lilian. O, Reuben! What do you mean? (He remains silent.) Have pity on me — you don't know what hangs on it. You don't — you can't mean that you're changed to me?

Reuben. (Springing from the chair, throwing up his hands, and speaking aside.) She's afraid of it! She's afraid of it! She loves me still! (Returning to her.) And would Lilian find it hard if Reuben was changed to her?

Lilian. (After a short pause, and turning away her face.) Very hard, if he thought ill of her.

Reuben. That's no answer. Would it cost you much to think I was changed?

Lilian. I cannot bear this!

Reuben. (Smiling.) You can't bear to think so, eh? Is that it? Silent? Nay, a word will do—a smile. (In an altered tone, and laying his hand on her shoulder.) Lily, I've been honest with you all my life. You'll speak to me truly? What can't you bear?

Lilian. To give you pain. I would rather die.

Reuben. Do you know any thing, then, that would give me pain if I knew it too?

Lilian. Reuben! Reuben! this is torture!

Reuben. Be calm. It's only a word, and it must come. When we two kneel together in the church—when you take the vow that can't be unsaid—the vow of heart's love till death and after—

Lilian. (Starting up.) Spare me, spare me! I'm very wretched! (She is about to sink at his knees; but he prevents her.)

Reuben. My poor child!

Lilian. Reuben, I must speak now. I was so young—I had seen no one but you. I had not dreamed that there was another feeling—a master feeling, different from a sister's love—one that is not merely affection, but part of one's self. And it came so unperceived; it dawned on me so softly, rose so gradually, that it was high up, quickening every pulse, mingling with every breath, steeping all life in brightness, before I knew its power, before I felt that when that light was blotted out the whole world would be darkness.

Reuben. Well; and then?

Lilian. Then came misery. I had not been willingly guilty; but the thought of your great goodness haunted me like remorse. I strove to break the spell, and fled. But I could not fly from myself. And now, Reuben, that you have made me see the truth, I must go on. Spite of all, the fatal power still conquers. And O, if I once sinned in yielding my love to another, I shrink from a sin yet darker! I cannot, dare not take a false vow to Heaven, and betray the trust of your noble heart. (She sinks at his feet.)

Reuben. (Raising her.) Poor child! poor child!

Lilian. What! Can you forgive me?

Reuben. Forgive thee! forgive thee! (Pressing his lips tenderly on her forehead.) I partly guessed it. You see, by my calmness, I was prepared for it. (A pause.) And you! can you bear a surprise?

Lilian. What can I not bear, after this?

Reuben. Then leave me a little while; take a turn in the garden; take the left path, to the shrubbery. Don't ask why; I may perhaps join you soon. (Folds shawl round her head.) The path to the shrubbery! remember!

Lilian. (Kissing his hand reverently.) Bless you! (He leads her to window, c., and watches her in silence till she disappears in the walk.)

Reuben. (Advancing slowly to front.) I know the worst! (Sinks into a chair.) This is no longer a home for me. Soon, as she passed just now from me down the walk, she'll pass from me forever. I shall see her no more. Not see her! O, yes; see her always. In strange lands she'll flit before my eyes—my own little playmate, with her

straw hat and bright curls, her white frock, and the blue sash that I used to tie for her. I shall see her pattering by me as when we plucked the spring primroses. I shall see the young girl, with the warm flush on her cheek, as when I rode beside her pony. I shall see her as to-day, with her graceful movements, and her soft, sad face; and I shall see — ah, there's comfort! — I shall see forever the smile with which she blessed me! Yes; while I live, the day will never come that I shall not see Lilian. (*He bursts into tears; then leans back quietly in the chair.*)

Enter AMY, bounding in.

Amy. O, you're here, Reuben! You promised me a walk, sir. Not a word! O, some bad magician has put him to sleep, and I shall be the good fairy to rouse him! Wake, sleeper, wake! (*She playfully raises his arm, which falls listlessly to his side.*) Reuben, what's the matter? It's Amy; your pet, Amy.

Reuben. (*Holds her at arm's length, gazes on her wistfully, then strains her to him.*) Yes, Amy's still mine.

Amy. She'll never leave you; and Aunt Lilian —

Reuben. Aunt Lilian! (*After a short struggle.*) I've learned Amy's lesson. Aunt Lilian goes away from us — goes where she'll be happy.

Amy. What! And leaves you —

Reuben. Not wretched. Amy, I might have been a villain, and broken her heart. I've done right; I've saved her. (*Rises.*) No, not wretched!

Enter LILIAN and FERGUS, followed by MR. TREVOR, C. D. R. H.

Lilian. Reuben, what does this mean?

Reuben. (*Takes the hand of FERGUS, places it in LILIAN's, and addresses MR. TREVOR.*) This is Fergus Graham, Lilian's preserver. He loves her. Your blessing for them. That alone will cure her.

Mr. Trevor. Fergus Graham! He loves her! I see. Reuben, you're a noble fellow. (*FERGUS silently clasps REUBEN's hand.* REUBEN walks apart; LILIAN follows him.)

Lilian. (*Laying her hand softly on his arm.*) My own brother! (*MR. TREVOR, FERGUS, and AMY approach them.*)

Reuben. You're all very kind to me. I shall think of you often when I'm far away. For I go to a land that asks for a man's pith and sinew; where there are broad forests to be cleared, wide prairies to roam.

Mr. Trevor. No, my lad, I can't lose you.

Reuben. Thank you; but my mind's made up.

Lilian. (*Imploringly.*) For my sake!

Fergus. For our sake!

Reuben. I shall think always that you wished it; but — (*Shakes his head in dissent.*)

Amy. (*Rushing forward, and grasping the skirts of his coat.*) Reuben, Reuben! will you leave your own Amy?

Reuben. (*Much moved, and regarding her fixedly.*) Amy, Amy ! pet, darling, comfort ! O, I didn't guess till now the hold she had on me. Leave her ! Heaven, that denies me a wife's love, has perhaps given me its next blessing in the pure love of a child. It's a hard struggle ; but with a clear conscience and her dear help, I shall get through, I shall get through. (*Cheerfully.*) Yes, Amy ; I stay for thee ! (*He sinks into a chair, and embraces her fondly.*)

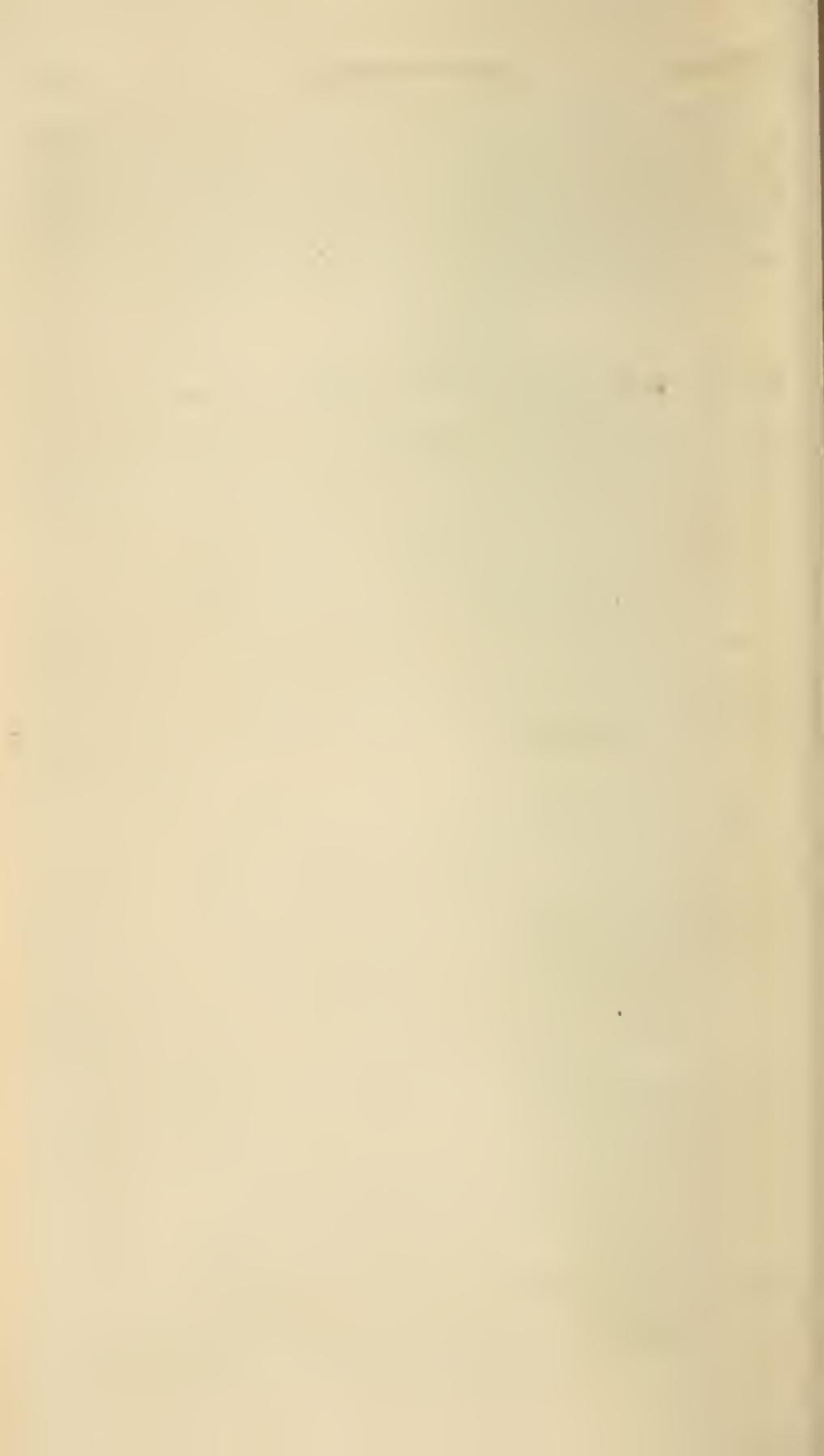
SITUATIONS.

TREVOR. **AMY**, *kneeling.* REUBEN, *in chair.* LILIAN. FERGUS.

Curtain.

R. H.

L. H.



NO. CCCXXVIII.

FRENCH'S STANDARD DRAMA.
The Acting Edition.

PURE GOLD:

A PLAY, IN FOUR ACTS.

BY WESTLAND MARSTON, ESQ.

TO WHICH ARE ADDED

A description of the Costume—Cast of the Characters—Entrances and Exits—
Relative Positions of the Performers on the Stage, and
the whole of the Stage Business.

AS NOW PERFORMED AT THE PRINCIPAL ENGLISH
AND AMERICAN THEATRES.

NEW YORK:

S A M U E L F R E N C H , P U B L I S H E R ,
122 NASSAU STREET, (UP STAIRS.)

[CAST OF CHARACTERS—PURE GOLD.]

Sadler's Wells,
London, 1863.

Wallack's,
New York, 1864.

Frank Rochford [an Artist—

Langley's Nephew.....Mr. Henry Marsto..Mr. Lester Wallack.
Lancia [a Refugee].....Mr. W. D. Gresham..Mr. Charles Fisher.
Brackenbury [a Poor Gent.]..Mr. T. B. Bennett...Mr. Mark Smith.
Sir Gerard Fane, Bart......Mr. Edmund Phelps Mr. W. R. Floyd.
Gilbert Brackenbury [his Son]..Mr. David H. Jones Mr. Daly.
Langley [a Civil Engineer]...Mr. PerfitMr. Norton.
Morley [a London Merchant]..Mr. A. BaileonMr. Moore.
1st Officer of Police.....Mr. MortimerMr. Brown.
2d ditto.....Mr. Clifton.....Mr. Bryson.
3d ditto.....Mr. A. Vivian.....
Rinaldo, { Political { Mr. E. H. Brooke { Mr. Pope, .
De l' Epine, { Emissaries, { Mr. Hastings, { Mr. Parkes.
Jackson [a Lodge Keeper]....Mr. A. Denial.....Mr. Williamson.
Fritz.....Miss Rogers.....
Schmidt.....Mr. Geo. Vinning..
Neuner [Landlord of an Hotel
at Baden]Mr. Robinson.....Mr. James.

Waiters, Attendants, &c., &c.

Miss Fortescue [Friend of Mrs.

RochfordMrs. B. White.....Mrs. Hoey.
Evelyn Rochford.....Miss Marriott.....Miss M. Henriques
Mrs. Rochford [Roch.'s Wife]..Miss Mandlebert....Mrs. Jennings.

TIME—1ST ACT, 1841. An interval of about Fifteen Years is supposed to elapse
between the First and Second Acts.

RELATIVE POSITIONS, EXITS, &c.

R., means Right; L., Left; R. H., Right Hand, L. H., Left Hand; C., Centre; S. E., (or 2d E.,) Second Entrance; U. E., Upper Entrance; M. D., Middle Door; F., the Flat; D. F, Door in Flat; R. C., Right of Centre; L. C. Left of Centre.

R.

R. C.

C.

L. C.

L.

* The reader is supposed to be upon the Stage, facing the audience.

PURE GOLD.

ACT I.

SCENE FIRST.—*Front of the Conversations Haus at Baden Baden. Chairs, tables; VISITORS of both sexes conversing, or reading the Journals.—WAITERS are engaged in serving coffee, ices, &c., &c. Music, which ceases shortly after the curtain rises, heard from the Conversations Haus.*

Enter SIR GERARD FANE [a young exquisite of twenty,] R. U. R., smoking; with him MR. BRACKENBURY, about fifty, and slightly rheumatic.

Sir G. And so this is your famous Baden Baden, eh, Mr.—Mr. Brackenstone?

Brack. Brackenbury, pardon me, Sir Gerard; not Brackenstone. I think I remarked to you yesterday that I belong to the Baronial House of Brackenbury, that is, it was Baronial some years ago; whose family seat is, or rather was some years ago, Brackenbury Tower in Kent. *[All this delivered with an effort at carelessness.]*

Sir G. Oh, yes! I remember. *[Aside.]* How this worthy bore sticks to me? What a fossil it is, with its old family notions; as lively as my great grandfather in hair powder, and as fast as his coach and six.

Brack. Yes, Sir Gerard; we lost the Brackenbury title in the Wars of the Roses; and our estates—the tower included—were confiscated at the same time.

Sir G. Well, that is, indeed, some years ago.

Brack. But the Crown can't take away a man's ancestors, sir. We can still say "*Fuimus.*"—The Brackenburys belong to the past.

Sir G. *[Aside—yawning.]* I wish that could be said of their present representative.

Brack. And let me say, my young friend, though fortunes have changed with us, we are still a proud race; for instance, we never demean ourselves by low marriages—the late Mrs. Brackenbury, my lamented wife, traced her descent to the noble Irish house of the O'Kilmacows; my only son, now at school in England, is, according to authentic portraits, a juvenile image of the last Baron Brackenbury, barring his lordship's red hair; though, to be sure the boy has a touch of the O'Kilmacow family about the nose.

Sir G. What an interesting peculiarity!

Brack. I forgot to tell you that I still live in sight of Brackenbury Tower. The supporters of our shield may still be seen over the lodge

gates ; but in such decay, sir ! You could never guess they were the old family boars.

Sir G. Couldn't I ? [Aside.] On the contrary, that would have been my very first conjecture.

Brack. By the way, my little box in Kent is within a stone's throw of the house of my young friend, Miss Fortescue, the rich heiress, you know, now at Baden.

Sir G. You don't say so ? What, that dashing girl who pretends to despise our whole sex ? You must introduce me to her ! -

Brack. Introduce you ?

Sir G. Decidedly, my friend ; young Malcolm, of the Guards pressed her to dance last night, and got a rebuff that floored him. Now I've made a bet with Malcolm, that she shall polka with me thrice in one night before a week's out. You must introduce me !

Brack. Impossible ! she has a particular horror of very young men.

Sir G. All the better—I like difficult women ! Where's the sport if the game won't run ?

Brack. Game ! sport, Sir Gerard ! this is strange language—what can you know about women ?

Sir G. [Aside.] Was there ever such a piece of antiquity—does he suppose that I've reached *my* time of life, and gained no experience of the sex ? [Aloud.] Come, I'll take no denial :

Brack. [Aside.] I don't run much risk—she won't look at him twice—and she'll see that I consort with men of my own class abroad, though too poor to do so at home.

Sir G. Now's the time, my good fellow—I saw her ten minutes since at one of the little shops in the avenue.

[*Taking BRACKENBURY's arm and hurrying him off.*]

Brack. Stop ! stop ! sir. Confound it what a twinge.

Sir G. Beg pardon—I forgot your rheumatism.

Brack. [*Going off with him slowly.*] Gout, sir !—gout ! Gout is the hereditary complaint of the Brackenburys.

Sir G. What a pity it wasn't confiscated with the other family property, in the Wars of the Roses.

As they are going R, 2 E. enter LANGLEY, FRANK ROCHFORD, and MRS. ROCHFORD—SIR GERARD bows to MRS. ROCHFORD and goes out with BRACKENBURY, R. U. E.

Roch. [L.] Lucy, who was it that bowed to you ?

Mrs. R. [c.] Oh, Sir Gerard Fane, who sat with me at the table d'hôte.

Roch. [L.] Avoid him, dear Lucy ; though so young, he's one whose notice of a woman insults her.

Mrs. R. Indeed ! who told you so ?

Roch. A new acquaintance, but one whom I already respect ; the Count Manoli !

Mrs. R. Very well, Frank, I am warned.

Lang. [R.] Here, waiters ; chairs, and a table—coffee !

Waiter. Directly, sir.

He places chairs and a table down stage L., apart from the company, then serves coffee; Langley, Rochford and Mrs. R. sit.

Langley. [L.] Well, Frank, Lucy and I were lucky to fall in with you. You might have spared a little more time to an old fellow about to take his leave.

Roch. [R. of table.] True dear uncle; but I had no idea that it was so late; a pretty scene in the forest caught my eye, and I stayed to sketch it. See. [Producing his sketch book.] A mother at the door of a woodland cottage, with a toddling lassie of four holding by her finger. [Mrs. R. and Langley examine the sketch.]

Lang. My dear Lucy, you should really forbid these lonely rambles; the rascals always falling in with pretty faces. Look, now, at this peasant woman, with her coquettish air and limber figure.

Mrs. R. [c.] Nay, uncle Langley, there's an antidote to all my jealousy in the child. As usual, Frank has given her the features, the height, the very expression of our dear little Evelyn. I think if he were to paint a Hottentot child, she would be sure to turn out like our darling at home.

Rock. There she goes, uncle! How these mothers do rave about their little plagues in pinaflores!

Mrs. R. And are fathers one bit better, sir? Would you believe now, uncle Langley, I can hardly get a sight of the miniature he took of Evelyn? the miser keeps it all to himself in his waistcoat pocket.

Rock. A humane precaution, my dear, to prevent you from crying over it.

Mrs. R. [Holding up her parasol playfully.] Sir, if there were not company present, I would rap your knuckles severely. My precious Evelyn! at times I really could cry, it seems so unfeeling to have left her in London, though I am sure grandmama will take every care of her. This holiday excursion has been very unpleasant, uncle. Frank wanted a change, and we've very much enjoyed seeing you on your way to Italy. But, oh, what joy the going home will be!

Lang. Well, as I start in an hour for Strasbourg, provided that confounded Hendrick sends the remittances in time—why shouldn't you go back to morrow?

Roch. We shalſ be very sorry to part with you, uncle; but you'll forgive a mother's impatience.

Mrs. R. And a father's, if you please.

Roch. Well, then, a father's—I won't deny it.

Lang. Ah! good people, you have a happier lot than a bachelor like me. To think of a man at my years having to leave England for want of work, and become civil engineer to these projected railways in Italy!

Mrs. R. It is hard, dear uncle. I am sure we both feel for you.

Lang. I know it, lassie, and must not complain. The hard bed, as they say, is of my own making. Like a fool, I gambled away a moderate fortune at twenty-five—and now at fifty-five have barely means to pay my way to the land of my exile.

Mrs. R. You deserved a better fate; for I am sure you never have touched a card since I knew you.

Lang. No; were I ever so rich, I would never play again, except, perhaps, for trifling stakes and with a cool head.

Roch. Forgive me, uncle; but should you become as prosperous as we wish you; I hope you would never play more—not even for amusement.

Lang. [Laughing.] We'll talk of that when I've another fortune to lose. Waiter, a glass of Maraschino. [Rises and goes down L. C.] I don't like Frank's playing the Mentor to me thus. I can't even look on at a game of *rouge et noir*, but he's always at my heels—why if I were to risk a Napoleon or two, I could but lose them.

Waiter. [Bringing Maraschino.] The liqueur, which monsieur ordered.

Lang. [Drinking Maraschino and giving money.] There, that pays for all. [WAITER retires, LANGLEY returns to MR. and MRS. ROCNFORD.] By the way, Frank, I'm much annoyed that old Hendrick, of Frankfort, has not yet sent the money for those jewels which we left with him. I can't start till I get the remittance.

Roch. About fifty pounds English, is it not? six hundred florins.

Lang. Yes, that was his last offer, which I wrote to accept. The money should have reached me last night.

Roch. You believe him honest?

Lang. Oh yes, besides I have his receipt for the jewels. I dealt with him when I was a young spendthrift, and thought he would give more than I should get in London;—yes, the rascal has now all my family relics except this diamond ring of my poor father's. [Showing a diamond ring which he wears.] That, I would not part with.

Roch. [Looking at his watch.] The Frankfort diligence is just due—it might be well for you to go to the office in case the jeweler or his clerk should arrive.

Lang. I wish you could go for me, Frank—do, there's a dear fellow.

Roch. Suppose we both go?

Lang. No; I want a farewell gossip with Lucy.

Roch. Very well, uncle—I'll go. Have you the receipt for the jewels?

Lang. Yes, and another for the money already prepared. [Produces them from a pocket-book and gives them to ROCNFORD] There will be no difficulty, Frank; Hendrick and his clerk both know you.

Roch. I'll start at once. I shall find you either here or at the hotel? [Going.]

Lang. Yes, at the hotel. Stop, Frank, I declare I had forgotten my pistols; just call at the gunsmith's for the brace you left me to be repaired; I may have to travel in queer places, where I should miss such trusty friends. And come back soon—no more strolls in the wood in search of interesting young mothers.

Roch. Certainly not ; when I want a model of very fond foolish maternity I have always Lucy for a sitter.

Mrs. R. Beware, Frank ! [Holding up her parasol significantly.] Remember there will be no one to protect you at the hotel.

[ROCHFORD goes out, R. U. E.

Lang. [Aside.] I feel my own master again now he's gone. I'll manage to get quit of Lucy, and just look in at the *rouge et noir* table, to see how life goes. Lucy, are not those Mr. and Mrs. Merton, whose acquaintance we made yesterday ? Let me place you under their care for a few minutes. I have an enquiry or two to make.

Mrs. R. [Rising.] Very well, uncle, but you'll not be long ?

Lang. Not more than a quarter of an hour. [They advance to another table a little behind.] Good evening, Mrs. Merton, may I entrust Mrs. Rochford to you for a short time ?

MR. and MRS. MERTON at table, R.—LANGLEY and MRS. M. exchange salutations—MRS. R. sits—LANGLEY bows and retires, and shortly afterwards enters Conversations Haus, which VISITORS occasionally enter and quit till end of scene—Enter MISS FORTESCUE, SIR GERARD and BRACKENBURY, R. U. E.—MISS FORTESCUE's entrance produces a sensation in the company.

Sir G. [Smoking.] Nay, on my honor, Miss Fortescue, you are too severe ; if you could only guess, now, what a miracle you have accomplished—

Miss F. [Aside.] This begins to be amusing. In what way, pray ?

Sir G. Five minutes since I was bored to death with Baden—thought I had never seen a slower place —

Miss F. A cruel sentence. Poor Baden !

Sir G. Nay, that was my opinion ; I now find the place enchanting—I have met you !

Miss F. You do credit to your bringing up. At what school ?

Sir G. Harrow ! Harrow !

Miss F. When do you go back there ?

Sir G. Go back ? On my life, you have the advantage of me.

Miss F. Oh, you don't return then ?

Sir G. Return ? I was talking of Harrow School !

Miss F. So was I. I fear the fine old institution of the whipping block is out of date there —

Sir G. Madam.

Miss F. Or the school would never turn out affected mannikins, who puff their cigars in a lady's face, and who emit from their mouths two offensive things at once, their compliments and their smoke.

[Crosses, L.

Sir G. Confound her impudence ! A deuced fine girl though—a silly with good action, but wants more breaking in.

[He turns away, and enters into Conversations Haus.

Brack. Capital ! You put him down most properly, dear Miss Fortescue ; a young puppy scarcely out of his teens ; how different must be the sentiments of such a coxcomb, from the tried devotion of a

neighbor like me. Ah! If you would only encourage me with a smile —

Miss F. On my word, I don't know any one at whom I smile so often.

Brack. Do be serious. If you doubt my sincerity, set me any task, however hard, to prove it.

Miss F. Very well. [Dropping her handkerchief.] My handkerchief's dropped; pick it up.

Brack. [Hesitating.] Where is it?

Miss F. There, at my foot.

Brack. [After making an awkward attempt to stoop.] The truth is, I am just now suffering from gout—the hereditary complaint of the Brackenburgs—I can't very conveniently stoop.

Miss F. Alas! then you'll never do for me. I am romantic enough to desire a lover who can, at least, throw himself at my feet. [She takes up the handkerchief.] Forgive me neighbor; but when an elderly gentleman forgets the gravity of age, a girl of nineteen may be pardoned if she forgets its claims.

Brack. Age, age! why I'm only fifty—a mere boy comparatively—I want a dozen years of the time when men are made generals or appointed to a flag-ship.

Miss F. True; but love and war are distinct services; and men are often promoted in the latter, when they would be superannuated in the former. [Aside, observing Mrs. Rochford.] Surely, I know that face.

Brack. [Aside.] Superannuated! I believe she's laughing at me. I'll not waste another thought on her. I'll start for England by the next *ville poste*. Laugh at a Brackenbury connected with the O'Kilmucows! She has lost her chance. [Exit, n. n. n.]

Miss F. [Advancing to Mrs. Rochford.] It is she. My dear Lucy!

Mrs. R. Helen Fortescue! My own dear Helen! [They shake hands—Mrs. Rochford bows to the MERTONS, and advances with Miss FORTESCUE to table, down u., where they all sit.]

Miss F. Lucy, my dearest companion, my other self! What a budget we have to discuss! You know after my poor father's death I was sent to France. You were from England when I returned; so, positively, we have not met since you committed that awful piece of treachery.

Mrs. R. I?

Miss F. Was not my father your guardian? Did we not live for years under the same roof, with but one heart between us? Were we not sisters in all but name? I could have loved no sister more; and yet you must marry and desert me. Well, what is the man like?

Mrs. R. I only wish Nature had made his double for your sake.

Miss F. Thank you, my dear—it's quite as well that Nature spared herself the trouble. Now do come with me to my apartments.

Mrs. R. I must go to the hotel first to meet my husband.

Miss F. Innocent dove? Let its mate coo alone for awhile; you'll be the more welcome to the nest—and I want you all to myself.

Mrs. R. Well, for one quarter of an hour—I must then return to a relative about to leave us.

Miss. F. You must tell me all about your little Evelyn. She's not with you?

Mrs. R. Alas—no!

Miss F. What a sigh!—come love— [They rise.]

Mrs. R. I'm very foolish, Helen; but I have now and then such misgivings about my darling. If anything should happen to me, you'll not forget your old friend's child.

Miss F. [Jestingly.] When anything does happen to you, Lucy, I'll be reasonably kind to her, being a daughter; but, oh, love, never trust me with a boy! I should avenge myself in his person on all his fortune-hunting sex, and if he survived to be a man—but he never would under my discipline.

Mrs. R. Ah, Helen, when you're a mother! [They go off, L. U. E.]

Re-enter ROCHFORD, R. U. E.

Roch. Not at the hotel—not here! What can have become of them? I'm glad, at all events, that I've got the money for the jewels, for if my uncle means to start by the voiturier to Strasburg there's no time to lose. It's at least an English mile to the cabaret in the forest, from which the voiturier starts. Where can he be? Heaven grant not at the gaming table! I'll look in, though, to make sure.

As he is about to enter the Conversations Haus LANGLEY quits it with RINALDO and DE L'EPINE, with whom he is in altercation. SIR GERARD and others follow from the Conversations Haus and group around.

Rinal. I say, sir, this language is an insult.

Lang. And I repeat sir, I was a fool to play by your advice, and let myself be deluded by your confounded system.

Rinal. What do you mean by being deluded?

Lang. Well, I lost every time I staked.

Rinal. What then? Had I any interest in your losses? why you talk as if I and the bank had been in a league to rob you.

Lang. I never said so.

Rinal. You insinuated as much. Retract it! [Peremptorily.]

Lang. I never retract under a threat.

Rinal. Do you mean that I was in collusion with the bank—yes or no! [Raising his cane.]

Lang. No! though since you raise your cane, I might suspect it. There's a slight presumption that a man's a knave when he stoops to the argument of a bully.

Rinal. A bully?

De l'Ep. [To LANGLEY.] *Mon Dieu!* you are too warm, sir!

Rinal. A bully! You English churl, I'll teach you politeness.

De l'Ep. Nay, nay—

[RINALDO struggles with DE L'EPINE, and advances to chastise LANGLEY.]

Roch. [Interrupting him, c.] Stay, sir! I do not know who is in the right here; but I will permit no violence to this gentleman.

Rinal. And who are you, sir, who intrude yourself into other men's quarrels?

Roch. One who means no offence; but who will save you from the shame of assaulting a man nearly twice your age.

De l'Ep. [Apart to RINALDO.] Be cautious, you have reason—remember your mission.

Rinal. [To ROCHFORD.] His years shall not protect him, nor shall you.

Roch. Assault me then; it will be more to your credit.

De l'Ep. [Apart to RINALDO, and seizing his arm.] Are you mad? Have you not political secrets—would you draw on yourself the attention of the police?

Rinal. True, true, I am forced to be prudent, else I would cane him on the spot. [Aloud to LANGLEY.] I shall not lose sight of you, sir, be sure of it.

DE L'EPINE and RINALDO go out L. 1 E. amidst the laughter of the bystanders.

Sir G. What, there's to be no mill then. It's a regular sell; I expected something exciting—a duel on the spot, or at all events a little pleasant assault and battery. Why should the old fellow make such a noise about a few Napoleons, when he can afford to sport such a diamond ring! perhaps it's glass though!

He and some of the BYSTANDERS laugh, and enter Conversations Haus; the rest, with the exception of ROCHFORD and LANGLEY, disperse.

Lang. Now, Frank, don't go off—no scolding. It's of no use to make bad worse. I've been a fool, and I've paid the penalty.

Roch. It is not for me to reproach you, sir—have you lost much?

Lang. Cleared out to my last kreutzer.

Roch. But you have still the money for the jewels? Hendrick's clerk arrived by the diligence, and paid me the amount.

Lang. All gone, my dear fellow, except a few florins. You know the Count Manoli?

Roch. Perfectly; we often speak together.

Lang. Well, when I went in, the table was full; so to while away the time, I betted with the count on the colors as they turned up—in brief I lost to him nearly sixty Napoleons.

Roch. Good heavens!

Lang. Again I played and lost. As for Manoli, he behaved like a gentleman, and agreed to wait half an hour for his debt. We must go at once to his hotel.

Roch. And you—what funds have you left for your journey?

Lang. On my life, you hit me hard there, Frank—my few remaining florins won't cover a day's expenses. How much can you lend me?

Roch. Only a trifle, I fear. I have little more than will take me back to England.

Lang. The deuce you havn't—what's to be done! It's quite vital that I should push on to Italy, where my first official act must be to draw my salary in advance. I tell you, Frank, you must lend me what money you can, and raise the amount upon my diamond ring.

Roch. Your father's ring? A last relic!

Lang. My dear fellow there's no help for it. I shall redeem it from old Hendrick in a year; come, there it is! *[Offers it.]*

Roch. Nay, uncle.

Lang. Oh, if you think you run any risk—

Roch. I don't mean that!

Lang. Take it then!

Roch. Keep it till we part.

Lang. *[Replacing the ring on his finger.]* Very well; now see what you can do for me. You have the money for the jewels about you?

Roch. Yes!

Lang. Come then! First to pay the Count; then a kiss, and good-bye to Lucy; and off to the carbaret in the wood. You would rather see me in bad spirits, I know Pshaw! it's only the fortune of war.

Roch. True, but much depends on the kind of war. There are some wars in which even defeat is glorious; others in which success has no honor, and failure no consolation.

Lang. Here's a homily! Frank, you should have been a parson, not a painter. A parson! ha! ha! ha! *[They go out, L. U. E.]*

SCENE SECOND.—*A Wood. Moonlight.*

Enter THREE OFFICERS OF POLICE, L. 1 E.

1st Off. You know the Count Manoli by sight, you say?

2d Off. Yes; I never speak till I'm certain. He left his hotel, for a short ride in the forest—that's strange, at this hour.

1st Off. My orders, just received are to arrest him instantly!

2d Off. The Count Manoli! What has he done?

1st Off. Leave that to your betters. Any one starting by the voiturier to-night must pass this way.

3d Off. It's the common road.

1st Off. You are sure he was not one of the two men that passed us?

2d Off. Positive.

1st Off. There was a lad, too, wheeling an English traveler's baggage. That might be a truck, though. Voices! Stand close!

Enter LANGLEY and ROCHFORD, L. 1 E., the latter carrying a pistol-case.

1st Off. Your servant, gentlemen. May I ask whither you are bound?

Lang. To the Black Eagle. I take the voiturier, for Strasburg.

1st Off. *[Apart to 2d OFFICER.]* Do you know them?

2d Off. Neither of them is our man.

1st Off. [To LANGLEY.] So you take the voiturier—You're likely to have the Count Manoli for a fellow traveler, I hear.

Lang. You are mistaken there, I think.

1st Off. Do you know him?

Lang. For a capital horseman. He spurred off but now as if he were pursued by the devil or the police.

1st Off. On which road?

Lang. That to Frankfort.

1st Off. [Apart to others.] We're off the scent, I fear. [To LANGLEY and ROCHFORD.] Good night, gentlemen. [Crosses to L.—to LANGLEY.] Excuse me, that ring of yours sparkles, and may draw notice. This neighborhood is as famous for sharpers as for princes.

Lang. Thanks for your caution. Good night.

1st Off. Good night.

[OFFICERS go out, L. I. E.]

Lang. Well reminded, Frank—here is the ring. Come, no scruples, I've had your money.

Roch. I'm sorry—I'm obliged to take it.

Lang. [Giving it.] There—there—draw your glove over it. By the way, Frank, there's something wrong about the Count Manoli—I had no sooner paid him my debt, than he sprang to horse, and was off like the wind.

Roch. His countrymen are impulsive.

Lang. And some Englishmen too, you think—and now, Frank, go back—remember, Lucy had not returned when we hurried away—she will be anxious about yon.

Roch. But the road's lonely.

Lang. There's a bright moon, and I know every step—no further, I insist.

Roch. Good-bye, then—God bless you—here's your pistol-case.

[Gives it to LANGLEY.]

Lang. God bless you, dear Frank. [They shake hands.] Don't think worse of the old fellow than you can help.

Roch. Dear uncle, only be as good a friend to yourself, as you have ever been to me. Farewell! Farewell!

Lang. Now, George Langley a stout heart—the world's before you. Adieu! love to Lucy—adieu!

[He goes out, R. I. E.]

Roch. Adieu! and so we part—ships holding together on a brief course, then severed on a wide and changeful sea—whether ever to anchor again in the same port, is known but to Him whose breath is the impulse of our fate. Who comes here? [Enter FRITZ, wheeling a truck, R. I. E.] Stay—stay—you are the lad who took Mr. Langley's luggage to the cabaret.

Fritz. Yes, he'll be quite in time, sir; he has a good twenty minutes yet.

Roch. Your pace is quicker than mine, my boy—when you reach the hotel, let Mrs. Rochford know that I shall be back shortly.

Fritz. Very well, sir.

Roch. Don't fail now.

Fritz. You may depend on me.

[Exit, L. I. E.]

Roch. It was hardly kind of me to leave him till he reached the

cabaret. Whether my poor uncle's thoughtless disposition makes me fear for him; or because there's sadness in all partings, I have never felt for him so much tenderness—almost apprehension as now. How good he was to me when a boy—gay genial heart, how he entered into all my sports, and became himself a child. How often have I sat on his knee by a Christmas fire, and thought his cheery smile was made to match it. I have half a mind to follow him. Lucy will be freed from all anxiety about me now. [A report of firearms is heard, r.] What's that? [A second report, r.] There, again;—it comes from the direction which he took. It's not a night for a foul deed, or I should fear—nay, I do—I must be satisfied. Langley, uncle Langley!

[He goes out following LANGLEY, r. 1 E.]

SCENE THIRD.—*Another part of the Wood—Moonlight*—RINALDO, DE L'EPINE and LANGLEY, are discovered—DE L'EPINE, kneeling, supports LANGLEY, who is desperately wounded—RINALDO stands a little apart, pistol in hand.

De l'Ep. This is an ugly affair, Rinaldo.

Rinal. He provoked his fate.

Lang. [Faint.] You forced it upon me—compelled me to fight.

Rinal. Yes—you had insulted me grossly, and in public. I learned your movements and could not suffer you to escape without satisfaction; but you fell in a fair duel. You fought with your own weapons, mind, though we provided others.

De l'Ep. [To LANGLEY.] Ah! why did you not apologize?

Lang. Too late to ask. Fly, fly—while there is yet time.

De l'Ep. You're a gallant fellow.

Rinal. De l'Epine, we must indeed fly. Remember, not only our liberty, but the secrets of a cause are at stake.

De l'Ep. What would you do?

Rinal. Start at once by the voiturier to Strasburg.

De l'Ep. It's hard to leave you thus, but we must, even to send assistance. Come—the case may not be so bad—lean on me, I'll be very gentle, so—[he props up LANGLEY.] Poor fellow.

Rinal. Quick! quick! Moments are precious.

De l'Ep. [To LANGLEY.] Help will come. Keep up—keep up. Now, Rinaldo! [to LANGLEY,] help will come.

[RINALDO and DE L'EPINE exit, r. 1 E.]

Lang. No help will serve me now. I grow faint. Frank—poor Frank—if he knew this!

Enter ROCHFORD, l. 1 E.

Roch. Was it excited fancy, or did I indeed catch a voice? [A groan.] Who's that? It is he! Uncle Langley.

Lang. Ah, Frank! Frank!

Roch. Merciful Heaven!

[LANGLEY attempts to rise, ROCHFORD supports him.]

Roch. He'll bleed to death. What villain has done this?

Lang. My own folly. No vengeance. Frank I'm dying.

Roch. Oh, no. Help there—help.

Lang. Bless you ! Lucy—the pet at home—little Evelyn ! Ah ! no more games—no more—Frank ! *[He sinks back and dies.]*

Roch. *[Kneeling by his side.]* Langley, dear uncle—not a sound—he's gone ! Oh, night of horror ! how the still moonlight seems to mock this deed ! Ah ! a pistol ?

[He takes up and tries to examine pistol, then conceals it in his bosom.]

Enter three OFFICERS OF POLICE, as before, l. 2 E.

1st. Off. I could swear the shots came from this direction. See—see—a man on his knees ! What do you here ?

[Laying his hand on Rochford's shoulder.]

Roch. *[Starting up.]* Who speaks ? The murderer ! *[Seizes 1st OFFICER.]*

1st Off. Take off your hands. If murder has been done, perhaps you can tell us about it.

2d Off. *[Examining LANGLEY.]* The man's quite dead—these are the two persons whom we last met.

1st Off. *[To ROCIFORD.]* Now, sir, as you may see we are officers of the police ; we wait your explanation.

Roch. I can give none.

1st Off. *[Pointing to the body.]* We met you with this man some minutes back.

Roch. I parted from him almost instantly ; soon after, hearing the report of arms, I returned and found him—he was then dying.

1st Off. Strange that you should have been absent just in the crisis of time. Hold up your hand. *[ROCHFORD holds up his hand.]* Your glove's wet, smeared with blood.

Roch. It may be so.

1st Off. Take your glove off. *[ROCHFORD obeys—1ST OFFICER takes glove.]* What's that on your finger ? a diamond ring ! I noticed one like it on your companion's hand.

Roch. That is the ring he wore.

1st Off. I don't doubt it !

Roch. This poor gentleman was my kinsman. He gave me the ring in exchange for money which I furnished to him.

1st Off. You couldn't afford then to lend him the money ?

Roch. Alas, no !

1st Off. You admit then that you were poor ? *[Apart to 2D OFFICER.]* That shows his motive ! *[To ROCIFORD.]* Why do you keep that hand in your breast ? *[He roughly shakes ROCIFORD's hand, from which a pistol drops, which 1ST OFFICER picks up.]* So ! a pistol—and just discharged.

Roch. Yes ; I've seized it, as it might lead to detection.

1st Off. And be sure it will ! now, mark ; a few minutes since you were the victim's companion—we now find him murdered—his ring on your finger—yourself by his body—the murderous weapon on your person ; though you are unable to explain his death. You must with us to Baden—I arrest you for murder and robbery !

Roch. Murder ! robbery ? Beware, sir.

3d Off. Here is the fellow pistol, and a case.

1st Off. Give them to me. [To ROCHFORD.] Now, sir !

Roch. Charged with his murder ?—oh, monstrous ! [Aside.] And yet the proofs seem to thicken and cohere. Lucy, my own Lucy, God help thee ! [1st OFFICER touches him on the shoulder, and signs to him to proceed.] I'm ready !

1st Off. This way ! [To OFFICER.] Remove the body !

ROCHFORD goes out, preceded by 1ST OFFICER, and followed by 2D and 3D OFFICERS with body, L. 1 E.

SCENE FOURTH.—Front of the Conversations Haus, as before—Moonlight—The scene discovers various persons entering or quitting the Conversations Haus, among the latter, SCHMIDT, HENDRICK's Clerk.

Enter from Conversations Haus, SIR GERARD FANE, smoking.

Sir G. Well, for once, I leave a winner. But what's the use of money ? it won't buy a sensation. Ages since there was a fellow who offered a reward for a new pleasure. Gad, if life was so stale in his time, what must it be now ? Nothing like a sensation ever comes my way. [Voices at side, without, L. U. E. " Halloa there ! "—a group forms at L. of stage—other persons enter—a buzz of voices amidst which are heard the words—" Murder ! " " Robbery ! " " Seized by the Police ! " &c. &c.] What's that ?—Murder ! Robbery ! Ah ! perhaps affairs are looking up ! [Approaching group, L. U. E.] What is all this ?

Schmidt. There's a report that an English gentleman has been murdered—a Mr. Langley. I came over on business to him this very morning.

Sir G. Langley ! I recollect. I saw the man at the *rouge et noir* table. He sported a fine diamond ring, did he not ?

Voices. [From group.] Hush—hush—the police !

Enter OFFICERS OF POLICE, guarding ROCHFORD.

Schmidt. They have the man in custody.

1st Off. Halt awhile. Does any one here recognize this ring ?

[Exhibiting it.]

Sir G. Yes, I do by its old fashion. I noticed it on Langley's finger.

1st Off. Good ; you may be needed, sir.

Schmidt. [Astonished.] What, Mr. Rochford—Langley's nephew !

1st Off. Do you know the prisoner ?

Schmidt. Yes. I paid him six hundred florins to night on account of his uncle.

1st Off. [To 2D OFFICER.] Six hundred florins on the murdered man's account. Here's motive indeed.

2d Off. He had not nearly that sum about him.

Roch. He had paid it for a debt at play to the Count Manoli.

1st Off. Who, conveniently for you, happens to have fled.

Roch. You exceed your duty, sir ; these are matters for my judges, not for you.

Sir G. [Who has been peering into ROCHFORD's face.] The fellow has some pluck—what a look !

[The group close round ROCHFORD and OFFICERS.]

Enter MRS. ROCHFORD attended by NEUNER, the landlord, R. U. E.

Mrs. R. Here, Landlord, this way ; these gentlemen can perhaps inform us.

Neu. Gentlemen—this lady, staying at my hotel, has heard a report of some foul practice in the forest : she is alarmed for her husband who was last seen there.

Mrs. R. Yes, his name is Rochford.

Voices. Rochford !

[*The group divides and Mrs. R. recognizes her husband.*

Mrs. R. Frank ! Frank ! O, I've been in such trouble.

1st Off. Alas, madam, I fear worse is in store for you.

Roch. [To OFFICER.] One moment. Lucy, [they embrace,] dear loving wife, the truth will come best from my lips—I'm a prisoner.

Mrs. R. A prisoner—on what charge ?

Roch. One that you will laugh to scorn.

Mrs. R. [Passionately.] On what charge ?

Roch. My poor uncle has been murdered.

Mrs. R. Uncle Langley !—horrible !

Roch. I am accused of the crime.

Mrs. R. [Bewildered.] Of his murder ?—ha, ha, ha !

Roch. Appearances are against me ; but fear not, I can explain all.

Mrs. R. Explain ! am I awake ?

Roch. Lucy, you will never doubt me ?

Mrs. R. Doubt you—you ! Frank, my mind wanders ; keep me close.

1st Off. Be calm, madam ; your husband goes to prison.

Mrs. R. To prison, then—I with him.

1st Off. It cannot be.

Roch. Lucy, obey for my sake. [Aside.] Oh, this is the keenest pang of all ! her name—that of my child, may be stained in mine. My own, we must part.

Mrs. R. Never !

Roch. Lucy, you're the wife of an innocent man.

Mrs. R. Yes.

Roch. Then you will say, my husband is innocent, I will not tremble ; he goes to prison, but it is to meet a slander, to redeem his name ; he will redeem it—I will let him go. [Unwinding her arms.

Mrs. R. Go, Frank, go.

Roch. Bless you ! [Kissing her.] Be gentle with her, my friend. [Resigns her to NEUNER.] Lead on, gentlemen.

Music—MRS. R. lies insensible in NEUNER's arms. ROCIFORD is going out in charge of Officers, and followed by others as act drop falls.

Fifteen years are supposed to elapse between the 1st and 2d Acts.

ACT II.

SCENE FIRST.—*A Drawing Room in Miss FORTESCUE's Country House near Dover—the grounds are seen at back through an open French window—the Scene discovers Miss FORTESCUE and BRACKENBURY, both seated.*

Brack. Well, then, dear Miss Fortescue, we may now consider all finally settled except for one thing.

Miss F. What's that !

Brack. Why, since my son, Gilbert, and your protégé, Evelyn Rochford, are to be man and wife, you ought really to be more explicit.

Miss F. About what ?

Brack. About Miss Rochford's father. You know I only consent to the match because Gilbert is resolved upon it.

Miss F. And because I promised Evelyn six thousand pounds on her marriage.

Brack. True ; though an old family, we are too poor to dispense with money ; still, as my son's wife, Evelyn will inherit an ancient name, and —

Miss F. Pardon me, neighbor, if I'm rather tired of your ancient name. A man's family is not like a Stilton cheese—the better for being mouldy.

Brack. But you'll grant we have a right to know with whom we intermarry ? Now, as to Evelyn's father, who was he ?

Miss F. I have told you twenty times that I never saw him ; and that what I heard was not to his advantage. He left England fifteen years ago, and is probably dead by this time.

Brack. You can assure me, at least, that he was a gentleman ?

Miss F. My good friend, I can assure you of nothing. If your son marry Evelyn, he must take her at all risks.

Brack. These are hard terms.

Miss F. Then reject them.

Brack. But can't you say —

Miss F. Only what I have said before. Mr. Rochford's wife was my dearest friend ; she died about a year after her husband left England, and, in compliance with her last wish, I took her Evelyn, then a child of five, under my protection. That's all I can say—if you're not satisfied you'd better break off the match.

Brack. Don't be angry.

Miss F. I doubt whether it would break your son's heart if you did. I can tell you Evelyn is by no means pleased with his careless manner to her of late.

Brack. Ah, dear Miss Fortescue, juvenile lovers are careless, it's the fashion with them ; but what wonder, when they see how the enduring devotion of mature-aged men —

Miss F. Is cruelly slighted. I know what you mean to say. Fifteen years ago I refused you at Baden, and since then you've only gained one point in your favor.

Brack. And what's that ?

Miss F. Why, that you're fifteen years older, and were I to marry you, my penalty for that gross folly would be so much the shorter.

Brack. Ah ! you would sooner be a widow. I'm obliged.

Miss F. You see you will stroke my fur the wrong way ; what can you expect but a scratch ?

Brack. Well, Gilbert will be happy.

[Sighs.]

Miss F. Yes, think of that ; I know your pride in him, your sacri-

fices. You don't play the lover well, but I'm sure you always shone as a father. And now I must really dismiss you ; I expect a visitor every minute.

Brack. Indeed.

Miss F. Yes, a Mr. Vernon. Evelyn needs a finishing master for her drawing, and Brown, the Dover printseller, recommends this gentleman. Here's your cane, neighbor. [Gives it.] We're friends again. [They shake hands.] And so we shall be, if you will only treat me like a confirmed old maid as I am. Good morning, my friend.

Brack. Ah, Miss Fortescue !

[Goes out sighing, o. door.

Miss F. I'm vexed to the soul to evade him thus about Evelyn's father ; such concealment is repugnant to me. But, dear charming creature as, spite of her little foibles, she is, how would the world scorn her if the truth were known ! The child of a convict, imprisoned for life as a robber, and though, by some strange lenity, acquitted of murder, believed by all men to have been guilty of it ! It's true there were some faint suspicions against others ; that fact saved his life. Rochford's tale, though wild, was still possible. Yet the proofs were strong enough to convince even me—any one, but his loving, credulous wife, who died protesting his innocence. No, I dare not reveal to others what I have hid from Evelyn herself. Thank heaven, she believes her father dead, as indeed he may be ; and all she knows from me is, that he broke her mother's heart.

Enter EVELYN, by door c. from r.

Miss F. What, my ! darling I thought you were with Gilbert.

Eve. [Sadly.] Yes, dear friend, he has just left me.

Miss F. For a whole hour, possibly ; that is a trial.

Eve. No trial to him !

[Sits on tarbaret at the feet of *MISS FORTESCUE*, who caresses her.

Miss F. Another love quarrel ! what has happened ? Won't the monster go on his knees and swear that she's perfection ! Was he five minutes late to-day ; or what other enormity ?

Eve. Don't jest !

Miss F. I thought him so kind and good humoured.

Eve. It's that eternal good humour which freezes me. He's always, calm, smiling, and indifferent. I do like impulse in a man.

Miss F. A dangerous element, Evelyn.

Eve. So is fire ; but we risk the danger for the comfort.

Miss F. Why did you fall in love with him ?

Eve. He was so different then—all ardor and devotion. Since that last visit to London, when he entered at the Temple, he's come back as dry as one of his own law books, and throws as much romance into a love suit as he would into a Chancery one.

Miss F. It's but a manner he has caught. Depend upon it, he has been laughed at in London, for being romantic, and now, like many people of warm feelings, he shrinks from displaying them. The whole sex, as you know, is my aversion ; but, for a man, Gilbert is really passable.

Eve. Ah, kind friend, you say this to comfort me because you know that I do—do love him dearly. [Weeping] But why can't he show a little interest in me? How unlike he is to some other men—Sir Gerard Fane, for instance?

Miss F. I dislike Sir Gerard Fane more than ever! If I did not respect his relative, Captain Tresham, with whom he is now staying at Dover, I would forbid him the house.

Eve. Nay—he is so agreeable and well bred. You're too severe.

Miss F. And *you*, too gracious. I'm quite serious. At the Ashford Flower Show you let him monopolize you. At the officers' ball at Dover you were his constant partner; since then he has been here repeatedly! the last time you received him as if *he*, not Gilbert, had been your suitor.

Eve. I remember—Gilbert's coldness had stung me that morning—he had pressed me on a subject that always tortures me. [Rises.

Miss F. What subject?

Eve. That of my father, on whose life rests such a cloud. What could I say?

Miss F. Alas—nothing.

Eve. Oh, if you but knew how my father died, or what were his errors.

Miss F. Be thankful that a veil hides them. Enough, that by all report they cost you a mother's life.

Eve. Still I yearn to know—yes yearn—even while I dread.

Miss F. The mystery is now buried. Come, love, turn to happier thoughts. [Looking off. See, here comes Gilbert—no more tears.

Eve. [Aside.] He shall not see them. I'll go to my drawing.

She goes to an easel on which is an unfinished sketch in colors; brushes and a palette with colors are at hand, she takes up a brush. Miss F. occupies herself in writing—enter GILBERT, c.

Gilb. What! Evelyn, at your drawing?

Eve. [Pretending to be absorbed.] I cannot get this water to look transparent.

Gilb. Will your ladyship deign me a word?

Eve. Oh, it's you, Gilbert.

Gilb. Yes, it is. Have you quite decided?

Eve. [Looking at sketch.] What a dull green that is. Decided about what!

Gilb. Why, the Dover regatta, of course. Now won't you allow me to drive you over?

Eve. I told you before, Gilbert, that I was engaged.

Gilb. Very well; you know that your will is always mine.

Eve. [Aside.] He doesn't make the least effort to persuade me—Yes, Gilbert, you generally agree in my decisions when they relieve you of my company.

Gilb. My dear Evelyn, be just. You tell me twice that you're engaged and don't wish to go. How can I imagine that you have nothing whatever to do and would very much like the excursion?

Eve. I shouldn't like it, and I don't mean to go.

Gilb [Laughing] Well, don't be angry, I only supposed that you knew your own mind.

Eve [Aside] There, he's laughing—my displeasure is but sport to him.

Miss F [Advancing] Gilbert, Evelyn is really engaged; she expects Mr. Vernon, a drawing master from Dover.

Gilb After he leaves we might still be in time for the regatta.

Eve [Aside] Ah, perhaps he does wish me to go! We should be very late, Gilbert; it would be scarcely worth while.

Gilb I'm sure it wouldn't, if you don't care for it—

Eve [Excitedly] I tell you once more I don't care for it.

[Retires and sits.]

Gilb Then I'll just tell Watson we shan't want the ponies. [Going.]

Miss F [Apart to him] A word, Gilbert—she thinks you indifferent.

Gilb Indifferent—why? I grant I'm not always at her feet, quoting poetry, as I once was. I've lived in London since then

Miss F And been laughed out of your heart, eh!

Gilb No; but out of my sentimentality. I was properly roasted for it by Templars and club men. I've learned, Miss Fortescue, that while it's manly to feel love, it's childish to prate of it. Acts for me, not talk. Mere words are like steam when it escapes. There's much noise, but the engine's at a stand. Deeds are like steam when it's confined. There's less sound but the train drives on.

Enter SERVANT, C.

Servant Signor Lancia, ma'am, has just arrived from London.

Miss F Signor Lancia! Say I'll come to him at once. [Exit SERVANT, C.] Lancia, my dear delightful patriot, the only man I have ever met who has love for his country, and who never pretends it to woman! Evelyn, you must join us: but, first, foolish children, make up your quarrel. Troubles, like weeds, spring up of their own accord; there's no need for us to sow them. [She goes out.]

Eve Gilbert, she's right. I was out of humor and unjust.

Gilb Say no more, Evelyn, I beg. I had almost forgotten it.

Eve Forgotten it! If you had been angry, I should have felt it for weeks.

Gilb Nothing can be better; if I forget your little whims and you attend to mine we shall have a reasonable chance of being happy.

Eve My whims, sir! you take them easily.

Gilb I may as well, love, as I shall have to bear with them for life.

Eve To bear with them. You're under no compulsion, Gilbert—if I cannot be a wife to be prized I'll not be one to be endured.

Gilb [Good humoredly] Do you mean to be unendurable then?

Eve [Aside] He hasn't a spark of love for me. I can't even vex him.

Enter SERVANT, C.

Servant Sir Gerard Fane.

Eve [Aside] So.

Gilb [Displeased, aside] Here again!

[Exit SERVANT, C.]

Enter SIR GERARD, c.

Sir G. Good morning, Miss Rochford. How d'ye do, Mr. Blackenbury?

Eve. Good morning, Sir Gerard. [Shakes hands with him cordially.] I almost feared you had forgotten us.

Sir G. [Aside.] Good. I was here three days since. Miss Rochford, you give me a temptation to be absent.

Eve. What can that be?

Sir G. The pleasure of hearing that you regret it. [Bows.]

Eve. But you are too generous to seek pleasure at the expense of your friends.

Gilb. [Aside.] Humph.

Sir G. Nay, too selfish to remove their concern, when it so much flatters me

Gilb. [Aside.] What next?

Sir G. And now to my errand. This is what they call a great day at Dover. Do you patronize the regatta?

Eve. I fear not. It must be an interesting sight.

Sir G. You think so. My trap's at the inn; dare I ask for the pleasure of driving the ladies over?

Eve. [Aside.] I'm glad Gilbert hears this. [Aloud.] Oh, that would be delightful!

Gilb. [Aside.] What, after she refused me!

Eve. [To SIR GERARD.] But I must refer you to Miss Fortescue.

Sir G. She's now in the grounds. I just caught sight of her with that clever Italian, Signor Lancia. I'll offer my petition at once.

[Going.]

Eve. Wait, Sir Gerard, on second thoughts—

Sir G. Nay, I shan't permit you to retract; I told you I was selfish.

[Exit, c]

Eve [Advancing to GILBERT.] How grave he looks. Oh, I've been very wrong, but he so provoked me. Gilbert!

Gilb [Very coldly.] Miss Rochford.

Eve. Miss Rochford! why you're angry.

Gilb. Too much pained, madam, for anger.

Eve [Aside.] Pained; then he *does* love me. Indeed, Gilbert, I won't go to the regatta.

Gilb. You'd better tell this to Sir Gerard. [Taking his hat and going.]

Eve. You're not going—listen to me.

Gilb. Pardon me—some other time.

[Bows and goes slowly to window.]

Eve. No, now—now; forgive me, and you shall be as good-humored as you please. What, Gilbert!

Gilb. [Turning to her relentlessly.] Evelyn—Evelyn!

Eve. [Clapping her hands and affecting childish impenitence.] Naughty Evelyn! [He laughs and shakes his head, she takes his arm, they pass out by the window, c.]

SCENE SECOND.—*Grounds adjoining Miss FORTESCUE's House—House in the distance; on one side of grounds a lodge; a rustic seat in c. practicable.*

Enter JACKSON and MORLEY, from door of lodge, r. c.

Morl. So you're lodge-keeper here, friend?

Jack. Yes, sir, for these fifteen years.

Morl. You're positive that Sir Gerard Fane is now in the house yonder?

Jackson. Positive, sir; you'll be sure to find Sir Gerard Fane at the house.

Morl. Thank you, I'll wait for him. You've a fine prospect here.

Jack. Yes, sir, the view's much admired. It's wonderful what a sight of artists we have hereabouts in summer. [Pointing.] Look, there's one of 'em. [Pointing off.] A queer gentleman he is, to my thinking.

Morl. Why so?

Jack. Well, he came here three days since, and asked leave to sketch in the grounds.

Morl. That was but natural.

Jack. Yes; but I fancy it was all make-believe. After a few scratches with his pencil, he began questioning me about the ladies of the house.

Morl. Rather inquisitive, eh?

Jack. Yes; perhaps so; but in a mild gentleman-like sort of manner. But the strangest thing was how he would now and then fix his eyes on me, as if my words were guineas, and then look away as careless of 'em as if they was pebbles.

Morl. Some eccentric man of genius, I suppose.

Jack. I can't say as to that. But you should have seen him when the brougham passed through; "Who's that?" says he, all of a shake; "My mistress, Miss. Fortescue," says I; "Indeed," he answered, with a gasp, like. "I hope she won't think I'm taking a liberty;" "Not a bit, sir;" says I, she never shuts her gate against artists." Then I told him that my young lady, Miss Rochford, was a pretty tidy artist herself, and that Mr. Brown, the Dover printseller, was on the look out for a first-rate master, just so finish her off; la! what a start he gave—he snatched up his portfolio—wrung my hand as if I had been his best friend, and a minute after was tramping hard on his way to Dover!

Morl. Perhaps to make interest for this very situation.

Jack. In that case, why doesn't he march boldly up to the house? Look at him there as he sits with his head propped on his arm. Ah! he rises—he's coming this way.

Morl. Don't watch him; he may dislike observation. I've still a question or two to ask you; suppose we walk into the lodge here.

Jack. With all my heart, sir. [Exeunt, r. c.

Enter ROCHFORD, r. l. e., who has assumed the surname of VERNON—he advances with a feeble step, and places his portfolio on seat.

Roch. Is this a dream? About to see her!—the long—almost hopeless yearning of years fulfilled. Have I indeed been released from my prison?—shall I not wake and be still there? Released!—yes, pardoned for the services I rendered; but my innocence still unproved. Why do I delay? I have the needful testimonials, yet tremble to approach her. How can I meet her as a stranger? If she have her mother's look—if she speak to me with her mother's voice how shall I command myself?—I *must*! I must learn whether she cherishes the thought of a father, or turns from it as disgrace. If the latter, I will not shame her. I will quit her—quit her unknown—though it break my heart!

[*Throws herself on bench in emotion.*]

Re-enter MORLEY, door, r. c.

Morl. [After observing ROCHFORD] I'm not mistaken—it must be he! [Advancing] What, Vernon?

Roch. You, Morley! my best friend, who helped me when destitute?

Morl. Nay; I but recognized your merit as an artist, and employed you to instruct my daughter.

Roch. But what brings you from London, Morley?

Morl. I'm on the track of a superfine gentleman—Sir Gerard Fane.

Roch. Sir Gerard Fane! [Aside] Years back, the scandal of Baden.

Morl. Yes, my friend; Sir Gerard; who having first borrowed money of me on mortgage, deigned to improve our acquaintance, and even be a guest at my table.

Roch. A dangerous one!

Morl. He proved so. In a short time he pursued my daughter with his attentions. The dear simple girl was charmed and flattered—in short permitted herself to love him.

Roch. He proposed for her?

Morl. Not in words; he was too wary for that; but by his intimacy—his seeming tenderness—by all the nameless acts which speak to a woman's heart. After a while, on pretence of an advantageous purchase, he applied to me for a fresh loan of some hundreds. As he moved in a different sphere from mine, I had then heard nothing to his discredit—I would not distrust one who might be my son-in-law, I lent him the sum—this time without security; soon his visits grew fewer—then ceased! He left us, and fled to the Continent—I, defrauded of my money—my child, of her hopes and affections.

Roch. Well that she escaped from him!

Morl. Well indeed! I have since learned that it is this man's execrable pastime to win the attachment of trusting women, and, when he can do so safely, to compromise their reputation.

Roch. Villain! and he goes unpunished?

Morl. Yes, he is too crafty to commit himself.

Roch. And you are now in search of him?

Morl. Ay! to recover my money, or at least to punish him. He is at this moment in yonder house.

Roch. At Miss Fortescue's.

Morl. Yes ; it is even reported at Dover that he has a design on one of the inmates.

Roch. [With agitation.] What design ?

Morl. To repair by marriage the fortune he has lost on the turf.

Roch. Marriage ! with whom ?

Morl. It is said with a Miss Rochford, who resides there.

Roch. Miss Rochford ! [Aside.] Thank heaven I'm in time.

Mor. Stay, I hear voices. Can it be he ? No. [Looking off, L.]

Roch. Who then ? [Listening intently.] Women !

Mor. One of them.—

Roch. [Still listening, but without looking.] Hist ! they turn back.

Mor. [Still looking off.] Yes, they strike into another walk. But look, a new form appears, that of a younger woman : she approaches us—nearer—still nearer. How fresh and fair a creature ; yet her look is pensive—a flesh and blood April for your paintin', friend artist. [ROCHFORD grasps the seat by which he supports himself.] What's this, Vernon—you're ill ?

Roch. No, not ill. [Aside.] Courage—she's here.

Enter EVELYN, r. 1 E.—ROCHFORD totters forward and gazes on her earnestly ; MORLEY removes his hat to EVELYN, who returns his salutation. ROCHFORD then glances at MORLEY, and remembering himself, removes his hat to EVELYN.

Eve. Your look, sir, is a sort of enquiry. Have you any question for me ?

Roch. [Struggling with his emotion.] Young lady, if your name is—

Eve. My name is Rochford.

Roch. I have a letter for you, Miss Rochford. [He gives her letter.]

Mor. As you've business here, Vernon, I'll retire. [Aside.] He doesn't hear me—strange ! [Bows to EVELYN and goes out, r. 1 E.]

Eve. [Who has opened letter.] Oh, from the print-seller. You're the drawing-master he wrote about.

Roch. [Who has been lost in watching her, suddenly recovering himself.] Yes, yes, madam ; I have his recommendation, and other testimonials. I have specimens too—specimens—

[Pauses and presses his hand to his forehead.]

Eve. You seem faint ; the heat has overcome you ; lean on me.

Roch. You are all goodness ; but I am myself again—being very poor, the fear of your rejection, for a moment unnerved me.

Eve. I grieve that you are unfortunate. Pray walk with me to the house.

Roch. [Taking up portfolio.] Willingly, madam. [Aside.] Strength, Heaven, strength !

Enter SIR GERARD FANE, r. 1 E., meeting them.

Sir G. Occupied, Miss Rochford—or, may I again urge my request ?

Eve. [Courteously.] Thanks, Sir Gerard, but it would be in vain to-day—Miss Fortescue refuses. [Passes on.]

Roch. [Aside.] Sir Gerard !

[Regarding SIR G. fixedly.]

Sir G. [As EVELYN goes out.] I shall plead once more. [Regarding ROCIFORD.] You will know me, friend, when we next meet.

Roch. Possibly, sir. I have a retentive memory.

[Follows EVELYN out, L. U. E.]

Sir G. What does he mean? I could almost fancy I had seen him before. [Throws himself down on the garden bench.] I hope the rascal knows nothing to prejudice me with Evelyn. It's plain she likes me; each time that I call she gives me a warmer welcome. That of to-day was a challenge! The world says, she'll have her friend's money. Most likely, too, she has some fortune of her own. Yes, thoroughbred as I am, I must sacrifice myself and go into the shafts of matrimony. There's no help for it. [Enter MORLEY, R 1 E.; he stands apart and observes SIR GERARD FANE.] With fortune flown out of the window, and want thundering at the door—with that revengeful old Morley on the watch. [Observing MORLEY.] Eh! talk of the devil, &c., I could swear that's he! Here's a fix! Advancing to MORLEY with feigned delight.] What, Morley, my good friend! [Offers his hand.] Not shake hands?

Mor. With you, Sir Gerard?

Sir G. My dear fellow, if I'm so disagreeable to you, why do you come after me?

Mor. Why? For the money you wheedled out of me.

Sir G. Oh! that trifling loan?

Morl. With which you decamped to the Continent; but I heard you were come back.

Sir G. Yes, for the express purpose of paying you. I grew quite uneasy. "That worthy Morley," I said, "will be anxious about his money."

Morl. A little.

Sir G. All right; 'twill be at your bankers' next week. And now, dear Morely, your hand.

Morl. No sir; not to the spendthrift—the libertine—the gamester—

Sir G. [Soothingly.] Not quite so loud. Go on, Morley.

Morl. The impostor who deserted my child!

Sir G. On my life, you're unjust! I admired your daughter—who could help it? but I am, as you say, a spendthrift and a rover; I knew she would have been wretched with me; so I conquered my passion—I wasn't selfish enough to marry her.

Morl. Hypocrite!

Sir G. There's gratitude! Come this way, let's talk matters over.

[Offering his arm which MORLEY rejects.]

Mor. I demand my debt.

Sir G. Very natural; but not so loud, not so loud. This way, dear Morley.

Mor. I'll not be duped twice.

Sir G. Of course not. Take my arm. What, you won't—you really won't? Oh, very well!

They go out at side, opposite to that taken by EVELYN and ROCIFORD.

SCENE THIRD.—*Drawing Room as before.*

Enter EVELYN by window, followed by ROCHFORD, C.

Eve. Walk in, Mr. Vernon; you still look tired, pray sit. [He bows and sits, while she takes off her hat and scarf.] I'm quite impatient to begin. With Miss Fortesue's consent, I'll eke my first lesson to-morrow.

Roch. Shall I show you my sketches? [Opens his portfolio.]

Eve. Do so; but I must warn you you'll have a giddy pupil; I shall try your patience.

Roch. It will hold out.

Eve I've ordered refreshment in the next room. Till it's ready may I run through your portfolio? [Crosses to table, L.]

Roch. Certainly.

Eve. [Taking sketches from portfolio and examining them one by one.] A scene in Switzerland. How exquisite a contrast! The nook of green valley with its cattle and simple herdsmen, surrounded by mountain walls half veiled in mist—like our little human life, rounded by eternity.

Roch. [Enthusiastically.] You have the soul of a painter.

Eve. Ah, but not his hand. This is far beyond me. [Lays it aside.]

Roch. What do you say to this?

Eve. Sunset on the Rhine. How grandly that old fortress stands out! Still too difficult. [Lays it aside.] That's a fine clump of trees; perhaps I could manage that. [Lays it aside.] But what's this that looks so like a prison?

Roch. It is one—a prison in Germany. [She lays it aside.]

Eve. And here's another; surely it's a prison cell with its lonely inmate.

Roch. You are right.

Eve. These are gloomy subjects.

Roch. They are illustrations for a story.

Eve. A story—do you mean a romance?

Roch. You may call it so.

Eve. Oh, I delight so in romance. Do you know the author?

Roch. Yes, the poor artist beside you, obliged to eke out a living by his pen as well as pencil, is himself the author.

Eve. You! Author and artist both! Then you're what's called a genius. How delightful. What is the plot of the tale? Do tell me.

Roch. [Aside.] She leads to the very point. It relates to a father and a daughter.

Eve. A father! [Aside, turning away.] He little knows the grief of that word to me.

Roch. [Aside, watching her.] A father! She shrinks from the very name!

Eve. Well, Mr. Vernon?

Roch. [Affecting a smile.] Young lady, the story is a long one. Yet perhaps some day when you have patience—

Eve. You will tell it. I shall hold you to your word. Now follow me. [Rising.] Your must need refreshment. [Archly.] Do you know I'm getting almost afraid of you as you write romances. I'm told that you clever authors put every one you meet into your books. Pray don't introduce me!

Roch. You are quite safe.

Eve. If you do, I shall expect to be flattered. I don't object to a trifling fault or two, just to keep me human; but you must make me all that's noble and high-hearted.

Roch. I will try hard, if I undertake the task.

Eve. Come then, it's a compact—come. [Exeunt, R. door.]

Enter MISS FORTESCUE *and* SIR GERARD, C.

Miss F. You must excuse me, Sir Gerard; I am much engaged to-day. I thought you were at Dover by this time.

Sir G. No, I wanted to see you alone. Positively, I thought your *tête-à-tête* with Signor Lancia would never end. By the way, is not Lancia the droll fellow who goes through the country boring quiet folks for subscriptions, and persuading romantic ladies to hold fancy fairs for the cause of Italy?

Miss F. Remember, sir, that you speak of my friend. Have you further business with me?

Sir G. Only to persuade you to be amiable and relent.

Miss F. Relent as to what?

Sir G. As to the regatta; we should still be in time.

Miss F. Sir Gerard, I declined your offer before, I trust, civilly.

Sir G. Undeniably.

Miss F. Then don't repeat it, or I may decline uncivilly.

Sir G. But Miss Rochford's wishes—

Miss F. In this case, are not mine.

Sir G. Still—

Miss F. Excuse me; I have one marked failing—a proneness to be downright. Sometimes I tell people my opinion of them to their faces; that I may not yield to the temptation now, I prudently withdraw from it. Sir Gerard, good morning. [Exit, door R 3 E.]

Sir G. [Walking to and fro.] I should have married that woman after all: her fortune would have been one famous point—her temper another. Plain life's as insipid as plain water; but every word from her lips would have been a drop of such pure alcohol, that I think I could have relished the draught. [Sits.] I fear she'll hardly stand my friend with Evelyn. Can I win the pretty simpleton in spite of her? that might be difficult. Something must be done; if Morley fulfils his threat, I'm ruined. It's said there's some mystery about the girl's parentage. No matter, if she has money. But has she? Are there no means by which I could learn?

Re-enter ROCHFORD, R.

Roch. [Aside.] He here! Evelyn, how to protect thee?

[He takes up his portfolio and collects sketches.]

Sir G. Who's that?

Roch. The drawing-master.

Sir G. When the deuce did you come in?

Roch. Just now for my portfolio.

Sir G. *[Aside.]* The drawing-master! He may be the man for my purpose; I suppose he's often here and knows something of the family affairs. Your name is—is—

Roch. Vernon!

Sir G. Pardon me—are these sketches yours?

Roch. They are.

Sir G. Surely I know this place. Yes, it's Baden Baden with its saloon and pleasure grounds.

Roch. You are right.

Sir G. I thought so. *[Carelessly retaining the sketch.]* You find Miss Rochford an apt pupil—eh, Mr. Vernon?

Roch. She has much taste—

Sir G. Every gift of mind, person, and fortune—

Roch. Indeed! of fortune?

Sir G. Yes—you know, of course, that she'll be Miss Fortescue's heiress—

Roch. There's such a report. *[Aside.]* So, he would sound me.

Sir G. Nay, I take a liberty in speaking of it. But as her friend—

Roch. Naturally you feel interested. *[Aside.]* I'll give him full scope.

Sir G. *[Aside.]* The fellow's disposed to gossip. Who could fail to be interested in one so amiable—so—

Roch. So unsuspecting.

Sir G. So charitable.

Roch. To the poor, you mean?

Sir G. Ay, gives a great deal away, I'm sure.

Roch. I've heard so in Dover.

Sir G. You have. Excellent young lady. *[Aside.]* Then she has money of her own. Yes, she quite deserves her brilliant prospects.

Roch. I don't doubt it. Yet brilliant prospects have their dangers.

Sir G. Dangers, Mr. Vernon?

Roch. Nay, it's hardly for me—

Sir G. To discuss Miss Rochford's affairs. No, nor for me, still—

Roch. I meant the danger which attends inexperience.

Sir G. You're standing. *[Points to a chair. ROCHFORD sits L. of table.]* Yes, I take you.

Roch. The danger, Sir Gerard, that such a prize might fall to one unworthy of it.

Sir G. *[Aside.]* He talks freely, on my soul. Well, as you have broached the subject. I grant it would be a thousand pities if she became a prey to some designing fellow—say some country clod—without fortune or accomplishments.

Roch. And then, sir, you know there's equal danger on the other hand from men of very particular accomplishments.

Sir G. Ah, the ingratiating dogs.

Roch. Men, Sir Gerard, who, when they have run through one for-

tune—we'll say on the turf or at play—have the accomplishment of extracting another from the credulity of their friends.

Sir G. Hem—you're a bit of a cynic, Mr. Vernon. [Aside] Where have I heard that voice?

Roch. I once knew a London merchant, Sir Gerard, who had been the victim of such a person.

Sir G. A merchant! [Aside.] Morley, perhaps. I'm sure I've seen him before. A merchant, eh?

Roch. Into whose family this accomplished person gained entrance First he won the daughter's affection, and then made of it a key to the father's strong box. The one he robbed of money, the other of peace.

Sir G. So.

Roch. Oh, but he had other triumphs. There were honorable women, whose hopes he had blighted, for he could feign love for sport, and still keep clear of the law; innocent women whose good name he had stained, for he knew how to boast by hints, and still keep clear of the law. He was so accomplished, you see.

Sir G. Well, sir, what's this to the purpose?

Roch. Nothing, perhaps,—the mere habit of an artist to hit off a portrait. By the way, do you recognize it?

Sir G. I—no! Confound me if I do.

Roch. Not singular, Sir Gerard. I have often produced a striking likeness, which every one knew except the sitter.

Sir G. Wait a moment. Yes, yes; putting this and that together, I fancy you mean me. Do you see this cane?

Roch. It has a gold head. Is it paid for?

Sir G. You know that you are safe—that I cannot punish you without offending Miss Rochford. [Aside, looking at ROCHFORD keenly while he collects his sketches.] Rochford! Rochford! How that name and this man's face carry me back. Can it be? The very voice too.

Roch. I'll thank you for my sketch.

Sir G. [Looking at sketch, which he has retained.] Oh, this—your drawing of Baden. [Aside.] Baden! all tallies and coheres. You've been at Baden, perhaps?

Roch. I at Baden! Oh, yes—yes.

Sir G. [Aside.] He hesitates. So have I, years ago. A strange incident happened just then—the arrest of an Englishman for the robbery and murder of his kinsman.

Roch. (Controlling himself.) Indeed. Oblige me with my sketch.

Sir G. [Withdrawing it.] I saw him on his way to prison, in front of this very building. [Points to sketch.] I was present at his trial. I have never forgotten that man's face. [ROCHFORD screens his face with portfolio—SIR G. lays his hand upon it; ROCHFORD screens his face with a sketch.]

Roch. No doubt it would strike you—the sketch.

Sir G. You're in haste. He was convicted of robbery and imprisoned for life.

Roch. Oh! only of robbery.

Sir G. [Aside.] Clever rascal. As to the murder, there were faint suspicions against others, and his judges were squeamish.

Roch. Merciful, perhaps. But I am pressed.

[Holding his hand for sketch.]

Sir G. [Still withholding it.] I am not—and I have a fancy for you to hear me out. My belief is, that this convict escaped, that he came to England, that I have seen him here. [Surveying ROCHFORD.] His height about—about yours—his hair, iron grey—his age, perhaps still under fifty—his manner caustic and insolent—his profession, an artist's. You see I, too, can hit off a portrait. Is it like?

Roch. How can I tell? Show me the original.

Sir G. I thought so—the sitter, you said, seldom knows himself. You are a capital actor, though.

Roch. [Trying to laugh him down.] But you are not. Is this your clumsy revenge because I've just humbled you? Away, sir. [Going R.]

Sir G. Stay, Rochford!

Roch. Rochford!

Sir G. Aye, Rochford! I will see if others recognize my portrait of you; I will take it at once to your pupil, Miss Rochford.

Roch. [With uncontrolled emotion] To Evelyn! Oh, no! no, no, no.

Sir G. Evelyn!—you call her Evelyn! Evelyn Rochford—your own name, too! Then the mystery of her parentage—your agitation—ah! there's more in this. Yes, to Evelyn Rochford. [Going R.]

Roch. No, not to her—not to her!

Sir G. Why not?

Roch. Because—because—

Sir G. I'll tell you why—because you are her kinsman—a near one—too old for her brother—her father!

Roch. Her father?

Sir G. Yes; that word Evelyn from your lips, and your excitement, have betrayed you.

Roch. Wretched man! I depend for bread on my art, and you would ruin me with a patron—this explains all.

Sir G. Not to me. [A short pause.] Yet listen—there is one way perhaps, by which you might escape exposure.

Roch. Exposure!

Sir G. What you please. I doubt not that you are Rochford, the convict—Evelyn's father—yet for her sake—

Roch. Well?

Sir G. I might spare you; but mark me, there's an if—

Roch. If what?

Sir G. Can't you guess?

Roch. No.

Sir G. I must help you then—I love Evelyn.

Roch. [Restraining him df.] Go on—

Sir G. I would marry her—but—psha! why be nice with you? My affairs are desperate—I must marry a fortune.

Roch. Go on.

Sir G. You can help me.

Roch. No—she'll spurn you.

Sir G. In that distressing event you can still help me.

Roch. How?

Sir G. Confide to her privately who you are. Tell her I know your secret—that for your sake and her own, she must be mine; and bring me, too, an ample dowry from her protectress.

Roch. So, that's my task?

Sir G. Comply, and you are safe.

Roch. Villain, coward! Oh, words are poor! This to me—to me.

Sir G. Then you are her father?

Roch. Who said that?

Sir G. Your own passion again—why else should you—

Roch. Why else? Because I have that of which you have but the forged semblance—manhood. Because I was born to loathe baseness—to revere innocence—ay! and to protect it. Her father!—Why, were I the convict you spoke of I should scorn you still. Passion may drive the wretched even to blood—want, to plunder; and amidst the wreck of hope and virtue, they may still be men. But you who would force a child's heart through a father's agony—who would extort the marriage vow itself by the rack—the chained felon would pollute his hand by the touch of yours. Begone, I defy you!

Sir G. [Aside.] He must be Rochford! yet I may fail to prove it. Good morning! you'll be sane to-morrow. Till then, I'll keep your secret.

[Exit, c.

Roch. Discovered! and by him. Oh, I have been rash; but the thought of Evelyn transported me! No hope of his mercy—none! What's to be done? he will belie me to her—she must be warned too of his macinations! how? there's but one course—I must be forehand with him, and reveal myself. Yet how prove my innocence? no matter! I must trust to nature's instinct, and to *Him* who is the father's Father! Yes, Evelyn; thou shalt know me to-morrow.

[Sinks into chair, r. of table.

A C T I I I.

SCENE FIRST.—*Grounds in front of Miss FORTESCUE's House.*

Enter SIR GERARD, r. 1 e.

Sir G. So, he's with her now in that very room. He still gives me the answer of yesterday; bids me in fact, do my worst. Though I could almost swear to his face and voice, though his passion and alarm witness that he is Rochford, and show his relationship to Evelyn, how can I prove this? Were he once identified, all would go well. I should at least checkmate young Brackenbury, if he be my rival. What's my policy then? Decision—I'll act as if I had proof, and warn the Brackenburys, Rochford's emotion may again betray him. They'll keep his secret, I think; if so, its further disclosure would rest with me. Yes, I should be master of the situation. Who comes here? Oh, our friend of Italy, our clever patriot, who levies funds

for his country and makes himself the treasurer—a good notion that. Why, won't England become an oppressed nationality, and give a poor devil a chance. [Enter LANCIA, r. 1 E.] Good morning my honest patriot.

Lan. You recall me then, sir?

Sir G. Yes, my sublime virtue. I had once the honor in a crowd of rubbing against your immaculate shoulders.

Lan. You should have told me, Sir Gerard, that I might have brushed my coat.

Sir G. How—you speak thus and know me?

Lan. Yes; or why should I speak so. You were pointed out to me yesterday, besides, I have seen you at Baden. [Going.]

Sir G. What—at Baden? That's fifteen years since.

Lan. Very likely.

Sir G. Wait! wait!

Lan. Well, sir?

Sir G. [Forcibly taking his arm.] Yes, just fifteen years. The very time; you may remember, when an Englishman, named Rochford, was arrested.

Lan. I remember well--charged with robbery and murder?

Sir G. That's the villain.

Lan. I heard of him.

Sir G. You never saw the man.

Lan. [Carelessly.] Yes, yes, I have seen him.

Sir G. Often?

Lan. Several times.

Sir G. Lancia, I can help your fortunes—I mean, of course, your country's.

Lan. How?

Sir G. Could you identify this Rochford if you saw him?

Lan. I can't say!—possibly—why?

Sir G. Of course you detest his crimes?

Lan. [After a short pause.] Sir! am I a gentleman?

Sir G. Suppose this criminal had escaped—

Lan. Escaped!

Sir G. Would you help to bring him to justice?

Lan. I would! I would!

Sir G. He has escaped; I can confront you with him!

Lan. You can? do so then. Yes! by all means; but quickly—I sail to-night for Calais.

Sir G. You have the best of the day before you. [Looking off.] Ah! Miss Fortescue! we must break off—not a word of what has passed! Meet me in half an hour at the inn by the lodge.

Lan. And you'll tell me how this will serve my country?

Sir G. Yes, yes! remember: in half an hour! [Aside] Now, Rochford. [Exit, r. 1 E.]

Enter Miss FORTESCUE, l. 1 E.

Miss F. What! you, Lancia? I scarcely hoped to see you again at present. Was that Sir Gerard Fair who left you?

Lan. Yes, dear lady ; but talk not of him—I've just had glorious news, and flew back to tell it.

Miss F. Indeed !

Lan. Yes ; two battles have been fought, and the enemy decisively routed. Lombardy is free—my dear native Lombardy.

Miss F. News to stir one's blood—how glad I am ! How glad Evelyn Rochford will be.

Lan. [Musingly.] Evelyn Rochford—*Rochford* ?

Miss F. Is that strange ?

Lan. Oh, no, no ! I have reason to dwell upon her name

Miss F. Because, like me, she loves Italy. Well, good friend, your cause is half won. Oh ! were I but a man, I would help you—not with gold—but with steel.

Lan. Don't I know it ? Lady, if in going back to my land I feel one struggle, one pang, it is that I—that I leave— [Pausing in emotion.] Oh, I am much foolish !

Miss F. But you will return—you promised.

Lan. That is with heaven. I have but given Italy my toil ; she may need my blood.

Miss F. [Touched] Then this may be a last farewell—a farewell to the friend I most honored, to the true heart that beat but for a noble cause.

Lan. And who was it that cheered me ? Who, when men laughed at me for a dreamer, said, "Courage, Lancia ! better to live in noble dreams than in base realities." Whose heart and hand were ever open to the poor exile ? [Much moved.] Ah, lady, forgive the tongue that at parting falters with gratitude, devotion—love !

Miss F. [Surprised.] Lancia !

Lan. The Signora understands me—love for a sister. Would I had such. And now adieu. [Takes her hand.]

Miss F. Adieu, dear friend. May your lot be happy as your heart is noble. May you find friends—brothers ; even the sister you need.

Lan. Never shall I.

Miss F. Except you make one.

Lan. How ?

Miss F. As others do—by a wedding ring.

Lan. Marry I shall not. If I could live three lives I would not. Farewell, Signora. [Kissing her hand, then aside] Marry, Lancia ?—Never—never. [Exit, R. 1 E.]

Miss F. So he's gone ! Brave, high-hearted gentleman, who bore want with a smile, and lived but for his country, who never flattered me because I was rich, nor presumed because I was gracious. True, staunch friend, I shall miss thee. How pure was his gratitude. He loved me as a sister. Had he breathed a warmer love should I have shrank from it ? What, Helen Fortescue, this folly at your age !

[Smiling, but a good deal moved.]

Enter SERVANT, L. 1 E.

Servant. Mr. Brackenbury and Mr. Gilbert have called.

Miss F. Very well ; say I'll come instantly. [Exit SERVANT, L. 1

E.] There, it's over. [Wiping her eyes.] Go, good Lancia—Heaven prosper you, and let me thank it that I have seen one man from whom I was sorry to part. [Exit, L. 1 E.

SCENE SECOND.—*Library in Miss FORTESCUE'S House.*

ROCHFORD and EVELYN discovered; drawing on an easel, palette, brushes, &c.; EVELYN is engaged on her drawing, ROCHFORD stands near and observes her; a short silence; the clock strikes one.

Eve. One o'clock; then I may lay down my pencil; our lesson for the day is over.

Roch. Be it so then, we continue to-morrow?

Eve. Yes.

Roch. [Aside.] Now is the time.

Eve. [Showing her drawing.] Well, Mr. Vernon, have you any hope of your pupil?

Roch. Yes, you have taste and freedom, but— [Turning away aside.] How to reveal myself?

Eve. I know what you will say, I need care and patience.

Roch. The subject may not please you: shall we choose another? [Looking through his portfolio.]

Eve. No, no; you will spoil me by indulgence.

Roch. [Taking up sketch.] Here is a simpler one for to-morrow, and here— [Taking up a second sketch.] Ah! tis the very sketch.

Eve. That I should like, you think? [Approaching him.]

Roch. No; the one that startled you yesterday—that of the prison cell.

Eve. Prison cell! oh, yes. [Eagerly.] The sketch that led to your story.

Roch. That reminds me. I promised you to conclude it.

Eve. I have not forgotten; will you do so now?

Roch. If you desire it.

Eve. Of course I do. [Sits.] There I'm all attention.

Roch. [Aside.] A few minutes and she knows all. [Sinks into a chair, then slowly turns to her.] I must premise that the story is a sad one.

Eve. But it's only fiction.

Roch. Nay, partly taken from life

Eve. Then the more interesting.

Roch. I told you that it concerned a father and a daughter.

Eve. [Gravely.] You did. Begin with the lady—she was beautiful, of course?

Roch. In his eyes.

Eve. He was a fond parent, then?

Roch. He was.

Eve. And she loved him?

Roch. As my tale goes, they had been severed from her childhood.

Eve. By what cause?

Roch. That's the point of the story. Her father was accused of crime—of the robber's crime—it was even said, of the assassin's.

Eve. What a painful interest. Proceed.

Roch. The proofs were strong against him.

Eve. Was he guilty?

Roch. No, a thousand times no! but the law pronounced him so; yet, as there were faint doubts in his favor, his doom was the prison, not the scaffold.

Eve. A hard fate, if innocent.

Roch. Ay; cut off from his kind—from esteem—from love—from his friends—from his child!

Eve. Yes, his child! did he see her no more?

Roch. See her? [With forced cheerfulness.] Oh, yes, yes; in the story I bring it about that he does see her, but fears to reveal himself.

Eve. Why?

Roch. Lest she should believe him guilty.

Eve. But she was his child.

Roch. Well!

Eve. She would not have believed it. Spite of the dye on his hand—the chain on his limbs—the scorn of all men, she would have clung to him—she was his child.

Roch. [Aside.] Bless her, bless her! Is there no case, then, when a child will renounce a father?

Eve. [Aside, much moved.] My father broke my mother's heart. Yes, there are such cases. [Controlling herself.] But one thing strikes me—you have never mentioned his wife.

Roch [Agitated] Spare me there—she was a dear, dear, dear friend. Return to the husband.

Eve. Still the tenant of a dungeon?

Roch. Yes; but even there men's natures will show themselves. In time he came to be trusted, as a convict might be, with the oversight of his fellows. After some years a fire broke out in the prison—all was panic! For safety, the convicts were hurried into the prison yard. They would have seized the chance to escape, even by bloodshed. The counsels of this man restrained some; his firmness others; he leaned by the gate, fixed as its own stanchions. He raised the alarm, though fierce hands were at his throat, and wild faces, lurid beneath the flames, were gleaming on his own.

Eve. But help came?

Roch. Yes, in time—the flames were subdued, nor was the man's services forgotten; in two years more an order came for his release.

Eve. His innocence discovered?

Roch. No! though perhaps surmised.

Eve. Then he still went forth with a stained name!

Roch. He did: and the thought might have crushed him, but for another.

Eve. I guess it—it was the thought of his child?

Roch. It was.

Eve. He went to her!

Roch. Aye ; once released, he set forth in quest of her, for many lands and the sea were between them. Penniless, at times, he begged his way, nor felt it shame. One day he toiled with the peasants for bread ; the next, he gained a pittance by his art. Often, half famished, he made his bed beneath a hovel, or on the bare ground. The very elements seemed leagued against his single heart, but he still bore on ; want and toil, wind and rain, spent their force on him in vain. His life was charmed—a flame that hunger could not exhaust nor cold chill, nor storm quench—it was fed by heaven—it was love for his child.

Eve. Well, he found her, and her mother ?

Roch. He found her ; the mother—

Eve. Still lived ?

Roch. [Greatly moved.] In his memory—in his heart, but on earth no more—no more.

Eve. This relation pains you. Proceed no further.

Roch. I must ! I can command myself ; can you ?

Eve Surely, if you can.

Roch But there is more pain to follow, perhaps a shock.

Eve [Slightly alarmed] To whom ?

Roch Prepare yourself—be calm I entreat.

Eve Calm ! What mystery is this ? [Both rise.]

Roch I am about to end it. Oh, restrain yourself—that lonely mourner—that bereaved husband—

Eve [Grasping]. Well ?

Roch Is the man before you ?

Eve [Retreating] You terrify me. Why these confessions to a stranger ?

Roch A stranger ! How if through me your father spoke ?

Eve I have no father.

Roch Have you proof of that ?

Eve [Trembling] Silence—don't tell me that he lives ?

Roch Not tell you ?

Eve Not of him who broke my mother's heart !

Roch They are perjured who told you so. Your mother loved him—trusted him to the last. Here are my vouchers, her own letters to him. [Produces and gives letters.]

Eve Her very hand !

[Totters to a chair.]

Roch Evelyn !

Eve Evelyn !

Roch Yes, Evelyn, mine by the right of love, of nature. Ah, do you not yet see it ? I—I am Rochford !

Eve And my father ! No—no, unsay those fearful words ! [After a pause] Your proofs ?

Roch [Pointing to letters] Those letters ; where could I have obtained them, but from your mother ? Besides, many still know me. [She shrinks] Ay, shrink. I see—I see. [He weeps.]

Eve [Aside] Tears ! they are not feigned. It is true. Pity me, sir ; if you are indeed my father think what I must feel as—

Roch The child of a convict. I do, and since you recoil from me I'll not torture you. I'll quit you forever!

Eve Stay.

Roch Well?

Eve You said you were innocent. Prove it.

Roch I cannot. The proofs made against me. What can I say? Evelyn, crime leaves its stamp on the face—look on mine. Crime blunts the heart—is mine hardened? Have you no instinct that pleads for me? Evelyn, I implore— [He is about to kneel.]

Eve [Starting up] Oh, do not kneel, sir—not to me!

Roch Right! I will not. When under a felon's ban, your mother acquitted me. The man whom she trusted should not kneel. Pure in her sight and heaven's, I STAND! Dare I invoke her memory and meet your eye, unshrinking, if I were not innocent? Ah, that look! speak—answer!

Eve Innocent, I believe it, innocent! Father!

[Throws herself into his arms.]

Roch [Embracing her] Father! Close! close! I have thee—my own—my own.

Eve Ay—yours!

[They stand hand in hand.]

Roch Let me gaze—gaze. How have I dreamed of this! No dream now! This hand is warm—firm. I have seen thee in sleep; but the dawn was cruel. Now, I shall not dread the sun. I shall wake and have thee. Oh, moment that repays a life!

Eve I know you now.

Roch You might never have known me but for the threat of a villain.

Eve Who?

Roch Sir Gerard Fane! He guesses my secret, and would force you to marry him.

Eve Marry him! I am already betrothed.

Roch Betrothed!

Eve To Gilbert Brackenbury, the son of a neighbor.

Roch And you love him?

Eve Love him.

Roch Thank Heaven, she is safe.

Enter Miss FORTESQUE, BRACKENBURY, and GILBERT, c. from L.

Miss F What is this, Evelyn,—your hand in this gentleman's?

Brack Why that almost gives color to the statement.

Eve What statement?

Brack Sir Gerard Fane's; he has been with me, and declares that this person calling himself Vernon—

Roch Go on, sir.

Brack I must state the charge that you may refute it. He asserts that the so-called Vernon is no other than an escaped convict, and moreover—

Gib [Interrupting] Do not tell her that; it's false—monstrous!

Miss F Yet she must hear it, Gilbert, Evelyn, Sir Gerard dares to assert that Mr. Vernon is— [Hesitates.]

Eve I know it already ; the gentleman is my father.

Brack She admits it.

Miss F No—I demand his proofs.

Eve They will convince you.

Miss F Child, dear child, and if he were your father, can you guess—

Roch. Madam, she knows all—that I am a man with a branded name, but still innocent.

Gilb [To BRACKENBURY] Perhaps so ; it is at least possible.

Brack. [To GILBERT] Silence, sir. [To ROCHFORD] You grant, then, that your name is tainted ; and you, Miss Rochford, you acknowledge this man ?

Eve I acknowledge him.

Brack. Then I must tell you, with deep concern, that you can never be the wife of my son.

Roch. Ah, let me speak !

Brack. No ; it matters not whether you *are* guilty ; you have been pronounced so. My son shall never be connected with a reputed felon.

Eve [Indignantly] Felon ! Father !

Roch. Patience, love—no anger, no anger. [To BRACK] I can respect your feelings, sir, being myself a father ; still, you will grant she should not suffer. Listen, then, I'll not shame her. [BRACKENBURY makes a gesture of repulse] I'll quit this spot ; visit her as a stranger, in private, and seldom—seldom. I am quite reasonable.

Miss F. [Aside] Can this man be guilty ?

Brack. Words are idle. Gilbert !

[Going.]

Gilb. Stay, sir ; whatever her father's faults, they cannot affect Evelyn.

Brack. Not affect her ?

Gilb. No. Do we deal thus in meaner things ? Does the gold seeker reject his prize, because encumbered with earth ? Evelyn, I know your worth ; if it came not through a father, then heaven gave it you direct. Be mine for what you are—the dearer for your sorrow.

[Advances to her, and seizes her hand.]

Eve. Gilbert !

Brack. Am I in my senses ? Will you bring infamy upon your name ?

Gilb. No, sir, I will maintain it. Remember that sailor of our name—you have told me the tale often—who was hemmed in by the foe ; their guns had swept down his comrades—battered his ship from stem to stern. “ Strike your flag,” was the word—he refused “ But your ship sinks ! ” they cried. “ And I with it,” he answered, and went down. What's a man's ship to his betrothed ? If fate wreck Evelyn, it wrecks me with her.

Brack. But not you alone—your father—the weak fool who was proud of you—schemed for you—pinched for you—he is your victim. Persist, and you lose me—you shall be an outcast from my heart, and my memory.

Eve. Go, Gilbert, I implore—I command you.

Miss F. Gilbert, obey her—obey your father—go!

Gib. Only for a time, then—I'll not yield her.

Miss F. Silence—silence, Evelyn.

Eve. Do not speak—leave us.

Miss F. [To BRACKENBURY.] Come, sir—I feel for you—we will talk of this together.

[*Miss FORTESCUE, BRACKENBURY and GILBERT* go out, c.

Roch. [Approaching her.] Evelyn! [She stands absorbed.] Evelyn.

Eve. [Abstractedly.] Ah, yes, yes!

Roch. Not a look. I should have foreseen this—I have undone her.

Eve. [Rousing herself.] No! no, father. Do not heed his taunts—sit—sit. [She forces him into a chair, and kneels by his side.] Ah! lay your hand on my head thus—that's well. I know what you must have borne—I will be your comfort, father. We will have one home—one lot—we shall be so happy—you see I can smile already. But for this trial I had never guessed the half of Gilbert's love—and though I lose him, still that thought—yes—though I lose him—do not heed me—do not heed me. [She bursts into hysterical weeping.

Roch. My child!

A C T I V.

SCENE FIRST.—*Grounds in front of Miss FORTESCUE's house, as in Act III.*

Enter Miss FORTESCUE and ROCHFORD, l. 1 e.

Miss F. Yes, I admit the evidence is sufficient. These letters, in the hand of your wife, my dearest friend, and your other proofs, convince me.

[She hands him the letters.

Roch. You grant, then, that I am Rochford—Evelyn's father!

Miss F. I cannot doubt it, and I will add that strong as circumstances seemed against you, I would fain believe in your innocence. But is there no way still left to prove it.

Roch. None, save the confession of the real criminal.

Miss F. But those jewels which were sold? What became of the money you received for them, and which you were charged with appropriating?

Roch. It was paid to a certain Count Manoli by my uncle for a debt at play.

Miss F. And where is this Count Manoli? He might throw some light on the affair.

Roch. Yes, he might.

Miss F. Has due search been made for him?

Roch. For years: but in vain.

Miss F. [Aside.] Poor Evelyn! Who approaches? Sir Gerard Fane Rochford, Mr. Brackenbury will never consent to his son's marriage with Evelyn.

Roch. I know it.

Miss F. But for her sake he has promised me to keep your secret. You must do the same. Put Sir Gerard Vane to the proof. As you value Evelyn's honor, never admit to him that you are Rochford, or that—

[She hesitates.]

Roch. Or that I am her father. True—she must be spared that.

Miss F. Forgive me.

Roch. Freely. I know my part

Enter SIR GERARD, R. 1 E.

Sir G. Once more, Miss Fortescue, your very humble servant. Am I welcome?

Miss F. That depends upon your business. If it be to confess your slanders to this gentleman, and entreat his pardon—yes.

Sir G. So it's to be war, I find—very well—you mean to dispute my charges?

Roch. I do—and defy you to the proof.

Sir G. Bravely said, Rochford. How well you're looking—how free from anxiety—how safe and comfortable you must feel.

Roch. If you mean me by Rochford, I am safe. A man's character may be known by his enemies; mine is, Sir Gerard Fane.

Miss F. True, Mr. Vernon, but even malice itself should have some slight pretext. Are you sure, after all, that we do not wrong this man?

Roch. Wrong him?

Miss F. Yes; are such delusions the fruit of a sane mind? *[Speaking in a lower tone, but so as to be heard by SIR GERARD.]* I have just heard that he has had frightful losses on the turf—ruinous losses. It may be that the trouble has gone there. *[Touching forehead.]*

Roch. To his brain? It may be so.

Sir G. Miss Fortescue!

Miss F. *[Soothingly.]* Yes, Sir Gerard.

Sir G. Give me leave to say how thoroughly I admire you. You play a desperate game with a desperate spirit. It's almost a sensation to be matched against you. You insist on my proofs, then? Reflect, Rochford; the facts are not yet made public. You know my terms for silence.

Miss F. What terms, Mr. Vernon?

Roch. *[Forcing a laugh.]* Modest ones: I believe, madam, that you should give him your protegee, Miss Rochford, in marriage.

Sir G. Ay, or at least a compensation for the loss of her, which, in gallantry to so fair a lady, I must of course rate highly.

Miss F. Unfortunate man! His malady is past doubt.

Sir G. That's right—fortify, fortify—throw up your works! But in modern tactics the besieger has generally the advantage; he can attack, you see, from an unexpected point. I shall be really sorry to demolish such ingenious defences, especially with a lady in the garrison; but I must throw in a shell, since you force me. I must indeed. *[Aside, going.]* Where can Lancia be? He swore not to

fail me. [To Miss F.] *Au revoir*, my fair enemy : *au revoir*. [Exit R. 1E.

Roch. He has some proof, then ?

Miss F. I think not ; his vaunts may be the disguise of his weakness.

Roch. No—that look of wicked triumph was not feigned, and the shame will fall upon Evelyn.

Miss F. Come to the house—she will miss you.

Roch. Miss me ! You think so ! *Miss me !*

Miss F. Rochford; nerve yourself for her sake.

Roch. I shall not fail ; but the heart must have way. It is, because I would be strong with her, that I am weak now. [Exit L. 1 E.

SCENE SECOND—*The Drawing Room, as in Act II.*

Enter EVELYN and GILBERT, c. door.

Eve. Gilbert, dear Gilbert, I cannot bear this ; the struggle rends me. Have pity—say farewell !

[*Throws herself into a chair, L. C., he sits by her side.*

Gilb. And if that word must come, should your lips hurry it ? Ah, you cannot guess how I have loved you. Fool that I was to ape a heartless fashion, and feign indifference.

Eve And mad that I was to doubt you—to wound you with my jealous caprices. Ah ! Gilbert, the truth breaks upon us now.

Gilb Yes ; as the dawn upon the doomed man. But why should we bear a fate so wretched—so undeserved ? When we exchanged our vows, from that moment we were one—one no less than if we had knelt at the altar. Evelyn, I will not yield you ! already my wife in heart, be so in name—do not—do not reject me !

Enter ROCHFORD and MISS FORTESCUE, unobserved, c.

Eve Gilbert, your father's command. Do you think I would bring upon you his curse ?

Gilb What does he demand of me ? That I should be false to honor, no less than love—that I should desert you in your sorrow ?

Eve Remember his pride in you—his love.

Gilb In aught else I would obey him.

Eve Make his case yours, Gilbert. My father is innocent ; I know it—but men say otherwise. Could I force upon your father a union which he would deem shame ? Oh ! never—I have said it—never !

Gilb So stern, Evelyn !

Eve Stern ! Do I not feel ? Must I not henceforth travel with weary feet through the gloom whose sole light is memory ? Yes, my beloved, the memory of you !

[*Faltering.*

[*Kneeling.*

Gilb Ah, you relent !

Eve No ; you would not ask it. Think of a parent's claim—a parent's—to whom we owe life—love—nurture—of whose being ours

is a part. Help me, Gilbert, help me to do right. If you honor me, do not tempt me.

Gilb Evelyn, you have conquered; I resign you.

Eve Now then, while we have strength. Stay not at my feet.—Bless you, and farewell! [He kisses her hand passionately and rises.]

Enter BRACKENBURY, C.

Brack. I suspected this. So, Gilbert, I have sought for you.

Gilb You should have been earlier, sir; you would then have heard Evelyn reject me at your command. You have triumphed, father—sundered us forever. [Exit, L. C.]

Brack. Young lady, you have done well. My honor—the honor of an old name is all my wealth, and you have spared it. I thank you.

Roch. Yes, Evelyn, you have done well. [He takes both her hands and gazes on her intently] Nay, droop not. This sorrow will pass—thy father says it. Retire awhile, my own. I have business here.

Eve [Looking at him earnestly] You will not leave me?

Roch. [After a short pause] Leave thee—why ask—

Eve There is something in your very look like— [Pauses.]

Roch. Like what?

Eve Like a farewell.

Roch. [Aside] Strange instinct. [Aloud] Your mind has been overstrained. You need repose. Go, sweet. [She is going] Once more, Evelyn, to my heart—to my heart! Courage, my girl, [they embrace,] there is a Providence. Go—go!

[She goes out, ROCHFORD leading her to door R. and following her with his eyes, then returning, he stands a little behind BRACKENBURY and MISS FORTESCUE.]

Miss F. Now, Mr. Brackenbury, you are content, I hope. Gilbert has obeyed you.

Brack. If he hadn't I would have disowned him. I wouldn't have left him one of the family portraits.

Miss F. Well, they'll hardly bring him a fortune. Spoiled canvas fetches little at the auction rooms.

Brack. How, madam! my son sell his ancestors, sell the Brackenbury's and the O'Kilmacows!

Miss F. What else can he do? Your annuity, I believe, dies with you.

Brack. True—true, the poor fellow will indeed have to rough it.

Miss F. My dowry to Evelyn would have been a small provision for him.

Brack. What! Miss Fortescue, would you bribe me to my dis-honor?

Miss F. No, but I would lessen your pain in doing an act of justice.

Brack. Justice?

Miss F. [Coaxingly.] Ah, neighbor, let them marry; what's your name worth if it won't carry them through? Should the world

look a little shyly on Evelyn, you have your answer—she married a Brackenbury—that silences everything.

Brack. No, madam, not even that answer would avail against such facts.

Miss F. But the facts are not known. Sir Gerard cannot prove Rochford's identity, or that he is Evelyn's father.

Brack. But I should know it. He would come into Evelyn's presence, sit at my son's table; some day he would betray himself. No, with such perils, with Rochford in the same neighborhood, in the same land—what you ask is impossible—I will never yield.

Roch. [Advancing, c.] One word, sir; would your resolution be changed, if what report once gave out were true—if this Rochford, whom you so loathe, were indeed dead?

Brack. Dead! This is mockery.

Roch But answer—in that case?

Brack In that impossible case, I might yield.

Roch Then count me dead—dead to my country—dead to Evelyn—I will depart at once for Australia—pledge myself never to return—never, while you forbid it, to see my child, or even to hear from her. I will be as lost to her as if her foot were on my grave.

Miss F. What! Could you really tear yourself from your Evelyn?

Roch Yes, to her, mine is but a new tie—a loose creeper round her life—rend it, the tree will still flourish; but her love—the branch grafted on herself—if you blight that, you blight the root that bears it.

Miss F. This is a noble—a fearful sacrifice; and yet you are right, [To BRACKENBURY] You hear him, sir,

Brack I hear his proposal.

Miss F. What do you require?

Brack Security that he will keep it.

Roch Security! I am poor, and must live by toil. I am already suspected; who would employ the discovered convict? Say, then, should I be so mad as to return—should I court starvation and infamy—infamy that would wreck my child.

Miss F. He would not.

Roch [To BRACK] You do not refuse. Ah, think! the fate of two human beings is on your breath. You have given one life—give him, give her the heart's life—give them back Nature's own right—the rich man's crown—the poor man's riches—the right to love. They will bless you all your days—bless you when earth takes to her bosom your proud name, and my stained one—when we two have passed where all ranks are level, and all hearts open. No—you will not refuse me! [Clasps hands imploringly; BRACK slowly turns away.]

Miss F. And if he do, I will keep no terms with him. I will myself persuade Evelyn to marry Gilbert.

Brack No need, madam; for my son's sake, I accept this compact—I consent.

Miss F. Ah, neighbor, I knew—

Brack Not a word—not a word—the struggle is over—but it has been sharp. I would be alone. [Exit, L. C.

Miss F Rochford, from this moment I believe you innocent.
 [Gives him her hand, which he presses in silent emotion.]

Roch Now to fulfill my compact; I depart at once.

Miss F At once! you will first see Evelyn?

Roch See her—no. That would indeed unman me. I will but write a brief farewell, which you will give her—when I am gone.

Miss F Must this indeed be?

Roch It must—you felt that it must—I will now retire to the library. [Going c., and looking off L] Ah, who passes?

Miss F [Looking from c window] Sir Gerard Fane—and can I believe it? Lancia!

Roch Lancia!

Miss F Why this emotion.

Roch 'Tis nothing—the mere trick of my brain, which still conjures up the past. I will write my letter, and rejoin you. [Exit R D.

Miss F. What can have brought Lancia back, and in company with Sir Gerard? So, he's here to answer. [Enter LANCIA, L. C.] Here again, Lancia?

Lan Yes, for two motives. First, let me tell you, I have been to Dover. There a telegram reached me. I am restored to my estates and honors—recalled by the king.

Miss F [Shaking hands with him] Joy upon joy.

Lan Ay, joy, that would be perfect, but that it lacks one thing.

Miss F. What?

Lan A little word, a single word, but it may echo through a life. You know that my cause triumphs, and that the world, as you say, claps hands.

Miss F Ay, for liberty.

Lan For liberty? For success. Ah, dear lady, liberty, when it struggles, is like your London Lord Mayor on foot. No one knows him—the crowd—what is your word—jostles—ay, jostles him roughly; but liberty successful!—ah, that is my Lord Mayor in his glass coach, when the whole street follows him with shouts.

Miss F. Nay, Lancia, there are exceptions.

Lan Yes. Do I forget who honored the right in misfortune, whose goodness dropped a seed into my heart that quickened and sprung there. Day by day it struck deeper—grew, budded. I guessed not its name. I called it gratitude. At last, in one parting moment, in a rain of grief, it burst into flower. It was love—love for you.

Miss F. I remember—as a sister!

Lan No; love above above all other. But, poor and banished, could I offer you my hard lot! That is changed. Now I can speak; if with fear, still with honor. Dear friend—friend of the exile—I love you.

Miss F. Lancia [Aside] How like him!

Lan Now for that little word. May I hope?

Miss F. Do not ask me. I have cares to-day; cares for others, that would almost make my happiness a sin.

Lan [With delight] Your happiness, then—

Miss F. Once more, dear friend, urge me not now. What was that second motive for your return?

Lan To do what you will approve—an act of justice.

Miss F. Indeed! [Aside] I hear Rochford's step. Lancia, we are interrupted. Leave me for the present.

Lan For the present; but for the present.

[Kisses her hand. *Exit*, r. 1 E.

Enter ROCHFORD with letter, r. 2 E.

Roch. Here is the letter. [Giving it] Give it when I am past recall.

Miss F. About to go? Can this be real? Rochford, you will write to me from whatever port you embark. You will write, I say?

Roch. [Abstractedly] Yes; 'twas there we sat when I first hinted my story to her. How often will she sit there and the very sunlight fall as now. Others will see her—others—Is this my firmness? [Taking his hat] Farewell, generous woman. You, who have been a parent to my child, take the blessing of the parent who quits her.

[Takes Miss FORTESCUE's hand, then slowly advances to c. window.

Enter EVELYN by door L.

Eve My father! Ah, you are here.

[Clinging to him, Miss FORTESCUE conceals the letter.

Roch [Tenderly] My Evelyn, what brings you?

Eve A fear that I cannot master—fear to lose you.

Roch. Why this fear?

Eve I know not; but it pursues me everywhere, haunts even my dreams.

Roch. Your dreams, my child?

Eve Aye, but vivid as realities. Listen. 'Tis said sleep visits but the happy. Oh, false! Wretched, and worn out, I sought my chamber, stupor fell on me, and I slept. Father, I dreamed that we stood together as now. Suddenly the earth divided at our feet. We were severed, at first by a narrow line; then it widened—widened to a gulf, and a sea rolled between us. Still it spread. Soon I saw you, but dimly. I called to you, but in vain. Then all was mist, and I lost you—lost you!

Roch [Aside] And she loves me thus! [To EVELYN] Nay, 'twas but a dream.

Eve You will not leave me?

Roch Am I not here?

Eve You will always be mine?

Roch Thine! aye. Not closer light to eye or blood to the heart Thine! yes; were that wild dream true—did the yawning earth—the seas which it were death to tempt—did death itself divide us—love dies not—I should still be thine.

Sir G [At window] This way, gentlemen—follow, follow.

Roch [Observing him, and starting] Ah!

Sir G [Aside, as he enters] All is well. Lancia is wonderfully keen in this business.

Miss F You make free with my house, sir.

Sir G Naturally—being an enemy's post. [To *Roch*] What, she in your arms, and you not her father?

Roch And were I, should you not tremble?

Enter C. BRACK., LANCIA and GILBERT.

Sir G A threat! then I open fire. [All come forward] Signor Lancia, permit me—an old acquaintance. [Presents him to *Roch*.]

Roch That face again? [He and *LANCIA* gaze at each other in silence.]

Rir G You recognize him?

Lan. I could think so.

Roch Have I not met you before? Ay, often, at Baden—*Lancia*,—have you borne no other name?

Lan What other?

Roch Manoli—the Count Manoli.

Lan You are right.

Miss F The Count Manoli!

Lan Yes, the name which I now resume; and you who thus remember me, must be *Rochford*.

Sir G [To *Roch*] A slight error in tactics. [To *LANCIA*] You identify him, then: come, the truth—the whole truth.

Roch [To *LANCIA*.] You may remember then my companion, named *Langley*?

Lan He who was murdered?

Roch The same; on the very night of his murder he paid you for a debt at play—about sixty napoleons.

Lan I have not forgotten it.

Roch That sum was the produce of jewels which he had sold.

Lan Yes, so *Langley* told me.

Roch He did—you could have proved it, but you had fled.

Lan True; I had political secrets—spies were on my track.

Roch I had myself received the price of those jewels—was called to account for it; my story was disbelieved. You know the rest—I was condemned.

Lan And I could have cleared you?

Sir G [To *Lan*] Stay, this makes for him.

Lan [Soothingly] The whole truth you said—this is but part [To *ROCHFORD*] Yes you were condemned for robbery, and suspected of worse.

Roch I was.

Sir G Out with it—of murder.

Lan Now attend—I had a partner in my political schemes: his name was *Rinaldo*.

Roch *Rinaldo*? ay—speak.

Sir G [Aside] Why he's eager for it. [Approaches *LANCIA* and whispers] Wait, *Lanica*—first—

Lan No whispering; stand back, *Sir Gerard*.

Roch Right—stand back.

[Advancing

Sir G How, fellow?

Roch Stand back—I've more than life at stake. Now, Count, this Rinaldo?

Lan Came with me to England—we were seldom apart. After many years he was seized with a mortal sickness—on his death-bed he revealed to me a secret.

Roch Go on.

Lan He had heard of your fate. He confessed that he had himself slain Langley in a duel—confessed—ay, with what remorse, that you, though innocent, bore the infamy of his deed.

Roch Evelyn you hear?

Sir G [To LANCIA] This is fraud! Did you not feign to be his enemy?

Lan I saw you were, so concealed my purpose. Rochford, you've more to hear. I took down Rinald's confession. He signed it before me and another witness still living. An attested copy of that confession I have lately sent to Baden; but the original I kept.—Hoping to meet you I have brought it—Take, sir, the proof of your innocence—a proof with which you may dare the world.

Produces the written confession and gives it to ROCHFORD.

Roch [Glancing at paper] Ay, and before that world claim my right! A father's! Yes, my child, the stain is wiped away—the choked heart has vent. No shame, no shrinking, no parting now. Thine, Evelyn, thine for ever! [ROCHFORD and EVELYN embrace] I cannot thank you, sir; let this sight thank you. [To LANCIA.

Miss F But I can thank him, and I think one other can—Gilbert. [She takes GILBERT's hand and places it in EVELYN's] It's with your sanction, neighbor?

Brack. Why, yes, yes, certainly. [To ROCHFORD] I congratulate you, sir. [Aside] What a romance in the family history!

Miss F Still here, Sir Gerard—what can detain you?

Gib What, indeed? seeing there's no longer a reputation to slander—a woman to insult—or a bribe to extort.

Miss F You've fired your battery, Sir Gerard; but the fort stands you see.

Gib But he can retrieve himself with a new enemy; as I came in, I found awaiting him, certain skirmishers, cleverly posted round the house—certain emissaries from one Morley, a London merchant.

Sir G [Aside] By Jove, the fellow means bailiffs.

Gib Don't fear; a grateful country will provide for a man of your talents. You will be lodged in that royal mansion, vulgarly called the Queen's Bench.

Miss F The Queen's Bench! Then Newgate is defrauded.

Sir G Yes, I leave you the honors of victory. [To Miss FORTESCUE] A convict for your friend. [To GILBERT] The convict's child for your wife, ha! ha! [To BRACKENBURY] To you, sir, a proud addition to your family connexions. For myself, I must be famous, like Xenophon, in retreat. Good morning. I shall read of the lady's marriage, and doubtless of her distinguished parentage in the newspapers—Good morning—good morning [Exit, c.

Gib [Follows to the window and watches] He'll get clear of the men

after all. No, they were in ambush—he runs—they pursue—ah, a third meets and stops him. They close round—they have him—a very short engagement and a highly satisfactory result!

Roch [To EVELYN] Ah, could thy mother see us; and she may—she may—

Lan [To Miss FORTESCUE] I said you would approve of my act.

Miss F And of the door. Good friends, as to be happy is the fashion, for once I fall in with it. Oh, Evelyn, this love of yours!—you have done for me. One cannot be long with the sick and not risk infection.

Roch [Smiling] From Evelyn?

Miss F Yes; I'm as far gone as she—a mere woman—one of an enslaved sex—and so please you, here is my master.

[*Gives her hand to LANCIA.*]

Lan Expect no mercy; you have chosen your tyrant.

Eve Best of friends—you—you marry—oh, day of joy!

Brack [Aside] Marry him! and she might have been a Brackenbury.

Roch Count, you have given me all that man can give man—I rejoice in your joy.

[*Takes his hand.*]

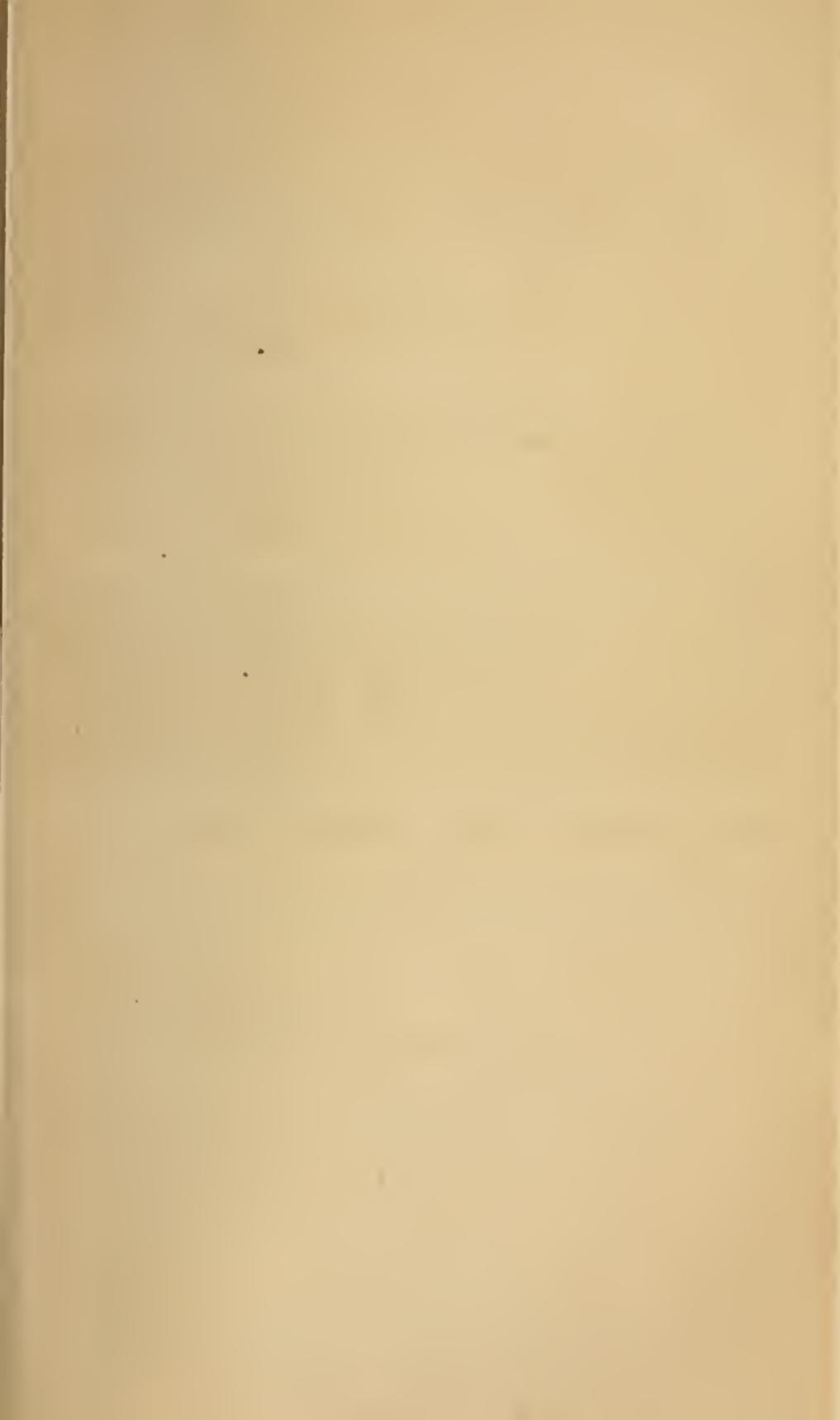
Eve Ah, there's a blessing in joy; but no less in sorrow—sorrow that makes life earnest, [looks at GILBERT,] shames us from our self love, with its poor vanities—its mean angers—and, through our own trials, teaches sympathy with all! Yes; there is virtue in the fire that purifies. Happy they who, like this noble heart, [pointing to LANCIA,] who like thee, my father, [embracing him,] come out of it—Pure Gold!

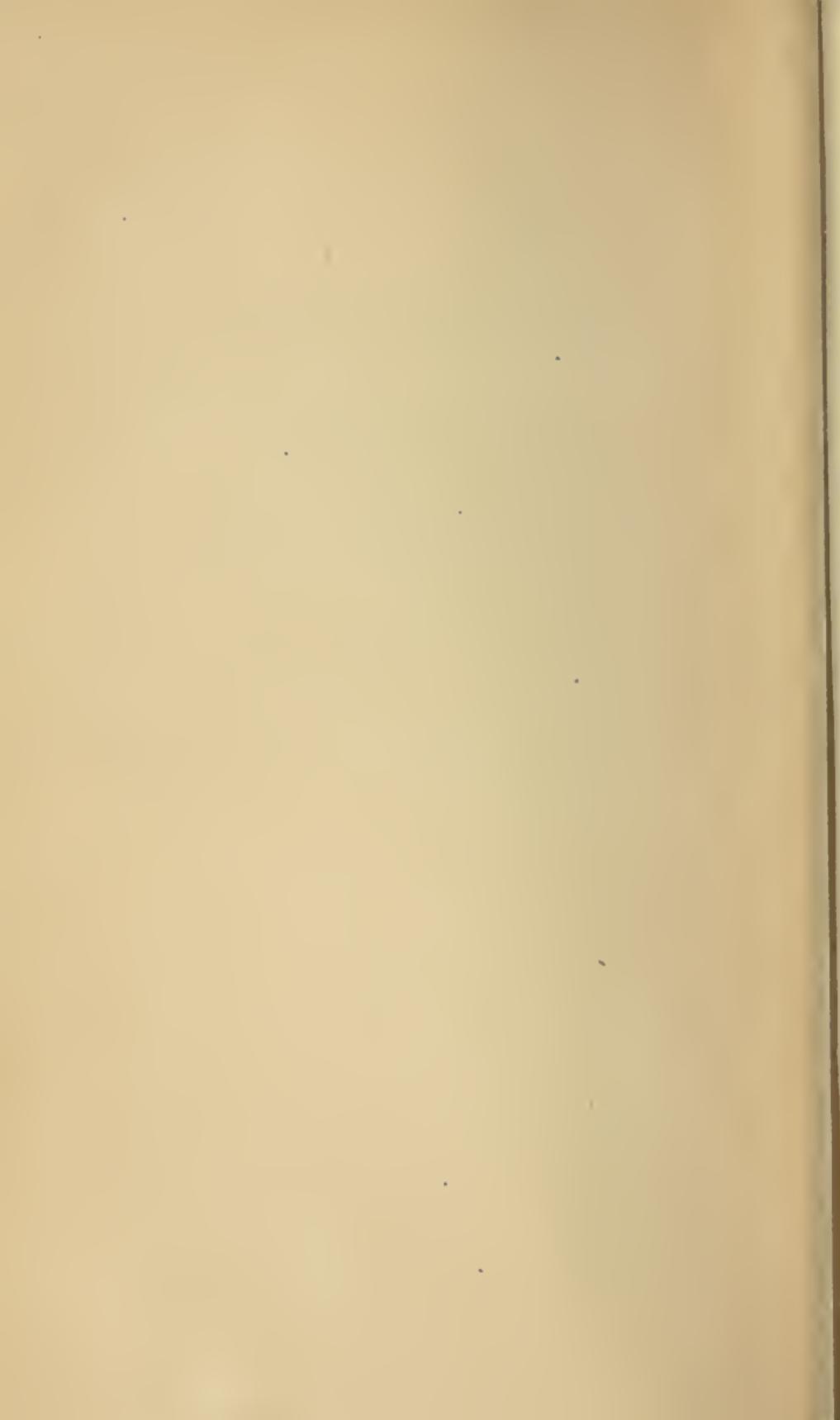
LANCIA. MISS F. ROCH. EVELYN. GILBERT. BRACK.

R.

L.

THE END.





THE
PATRICIAN'S DAUGHTER.

A Tragedy,

IN FIVE ACTS.

BY

J. WESTLAND MARSTON,

AUTHOR OF STRATHMORE, ANNE BLAKE, PHILIP OF FRANCE, THE
HEART AND THE WORLD, GERALD, AND
BOROUGH POLITICS.

WITH CASTS OF CHARACTERS, AND ALL THE STAGE BUSINESS,

AND A

MEMOIR OF MISS E. LOGAN.



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MEMOIR OF MISS ELIZA LOGAN.

AMONG the very many members of the theatrical profession, none can lay claim to higher social or professional distinction than the lady whose name heads this sketch. It is with great pleasure we lay before our patrons a brief narrative of her life. To thousands her name is as familiar as "household words," and we are confident that every person who has ever seen her act, or had the pleasure of making her acquaintance, will read with interest any thing relating to her early history.

Miss ELIZA LOGAN was born in the city of Philadelphia, in August, 1830. Her father, Mr. C. A. Logan, was one of the best comedians that ever trod the boards. The recollection of some of his personations, which we were so fortunate as to witness, calls a smile to our face at this moment. He was also an author of high attainments, and several plays from his pen are most admirable in language and construction. As a manager, at intervals, for twenty-five years, he maintained the esteem and respect of all with whom he was brought in contact. He died suddenly in the West some two or three years since.

The value of a good education was duly appreciated by Mr. Logan and his excellent wife, and their children received that careful culture, which the best schools afford. Miss Eliza received a thorough training at an excellent academy in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. At an early age she exhibited decided predilections for the stage. Her father immediately commenced instructing her, delighted at the promise she gave of the possession of true genius. Under his skilful tuition, she made rapid progress, and she was finally permitted to make her *debut* at the Chestnut Street Theatre, Philadelphia. A more successful "first appearance" has seldom been witnessed. But this handsome success did not inspire her with an idea that she was already an actress of the first grade. She knew that a knowledge of the minutiae of the profession was only the result of experience, and, determined to understand the profession which she had so ardently adopted thoroughly, she accepted an engagement at Cincinnati, where she performed for some time, serving her term of probation in the ranks before aspiring to command. It is evident that to her father she is much indebted for many acquisitions which greater experience than she has enjoyed could alone procure.

She soon emerged from her comparatively obscure and truly humble position, and as a star made a tour of the country, playing in all the principal cities of the Union, gaining extended fame, and producing on the part of managers a desire for frequent visits from one of the most profitable American actresses.

In May, 1855, Miss Logan played in Philadelphia; but perhaps we could not do better than make an extract or two from a long critique upon her acting, written by Mr. Fitzgerald, the responsible editor of *The City Item*.

"On Saturday evening last, this gifted actress concluded an engagement of twelve nights at the Walnut Street Theatre. Her success, considering the advanced period of the season, and the apathy which prevails among theatre goers, was extremely flattering. The house was well filled every night, and on several occasions crowded; the character of the audiences was, moreover, better than usual. We doubt if a star in the country, excepting, perhaps, Mr. Forrest, would have encountered such unequivocal success here under the circumstances. Miss Logan has now stood the test of an excellent engagement at the first theatre in the country, and the result cannot be otherwise than gratifying to herself and her numerous friends. Animated by such success, and cheered by the plaudits of true friends, her future professional career must be brilliant indeed.

"During her engagement at the Walnut, Miss Logan essayed ten distinct characters — *Julia*, *Bianca*, *Margaret Elmore*, *Mrs. Haller*, *Juliana*, *Eriadne*, *Juliet*, *Lucretia Borgia*, *Parthenia*, and *Adrienne*. There is scarcely a passion which sways the

BIOGRAPHY OF MISS ELIZA LOGAN.

human breast which is not embodied in one or more of these characters. To delineate them all successfully requires no common mental or physical powers. And yet Miss Logan passed triumphantly through this trying ordeal. In each and every one of the characters named she was entirely at home. Her *Margaret Elmore* was the finest representation of the character that we have seen for years. Her *Bianca* was truly superior—surpassed only in our recollection by Charlotte Cushman's. The intensity, fire, and passion displayed in her *Lucretia Borgia* will long be remembered by all who had the pleasure of witnessing the impersonation.

Now, we might have said all this, and more, of Miss Logan, in either of our last issues, but we have preferred to wait until she had left the city. And we are confident that but few will be found to differ with us in our estimate of the lady's abilities. Any one who had attended the Walnut regularly during the last fortnight, and watched attentively Miss Logan's matured and refined efforts in tragedy and comedy, must, if they are capable of judging, accord her a high professional position.

A friend, who spends his winters in the 'Sunny South,' tells us that if we would obtain an idea of Miss Logan's popularity in that quarter, we should see her play in Savannah or Augusta, Georgia, where the people fairly go crazy about her. And so, throughout the South and West, no one on the stage enjoys a greater popularity, or will draw better houses. The managers in that quarter consider Miss Logan one of the greatest cards they can obtain. In Boston, too, she is an immense favorite, and we are glad to notice that our managers have at length discovered her surprising merit.

We should not omit stating that during the last week of Miss Logan's engagement, she was waited upon by a number of our influential citizens, who were extremely desirous of tendering her a complimentary benefit. Mr. Marshall, the manager of the Broadway and Walnut Street Theatres, New York and Philadelphia, was also very anxious to extend her engagement, but both these flattering offers Miss Logan was compelled to decline, in consequence of imperative appointments elsewhere. She will, we have no doubt, cherish these tokens of appreciation, and when she returns, which we trust will be at an early period next season, an opportunity will offer of consummating this considerate desire of her friends. In parting from Miss Logan we wish her health, happiness, and a succession of professional triumphs, and bespeak for her the kind attentions of our editorial brethren throughout the country."

The press in every section of the country has ever been lavish in encomiums upon Miss Logan's acting. An excellent idea of her style may be gleaned from the following paragraph, which we cull from a long critique in the Boston Evening Gazette: "Were we to describe Miss Logan to one who had never seen her, we do not think that we could convey a better idea of her ability than by styling her a wholesome actress; one whom you do not witness with fear and trembling, lest she break down, but who creates a sympathy by the physical power she possesses to deliver, with pathos and force, those lengths which so often tax others of less worth." To this we would add that, correct in her readings, and intense in her delivery of impassioned passages, Miss Logan never fails to approach a point with decision, though, by her originality, she sometimes disappoints those who have seen the former representatives of *Eriadne*, *Margaret Elmore*, *Julia*, *Pauline*, &c., and who are prepared for conventional climaxes, which she studiously avoids, preferring to step aside from the beaten path, and leave to impulse what others owe to art. In short, we think the great beauty of her performance is the wonderful accuracy in the detail of the character she represents; the accuracy with which she modulates the emphasis of every word; her natural, easy gesticulation; the expressiveness of her countenance, the truthfulness of her conception, and the perfect manner of its execution. We unhesitatingly rank her among the first tragic actresses of the day.

In the private walks of life Miss Logan sustains a reputation surpassed by none. The death of her father left to her charge the support of a mother and a family of younger sisters. How nobly she has toiled it would not become us to state. Her career thus far has been unwaveringly onward; and, with the blessing of health, there is no limit to the height in the dramatic world to which she may not yet attain.

THE PATRICIAN'S DAUGHTER.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*Library in Lynterne Castle. The EARL and LADY MABEL discovered, with a book.*

Mabel. (L. H.) Yes, my lord.
But have you read this scene?

Earl. (R. H.) I have not.
But the point in hand, dear Mabel!

Mabel. 'Tis full of mirth and sprightly incident,
And keen, bright satire, through all which the heart
Breathes truth and sympathy! O, how I love
To track a noble soul in masquerade!

Earl. If it so please you, Mabel, that I wait
Until your raptures shall expend themselves,
I am content. (*He arranges papers.*)

(*MABEL, after a pause, rises and gives book to EARL, stands by side of EARL, who is seated, R. H., by table.*)

Mabel. You think, dear father, that I trifle. No!
You question of a lover; I reply
By comment on a book — themes separate,
As it may seem to you, but in my mind
Blended together; for the qualities
This book discloses I would have inspire
The man to whom my tributary soul
Should render its allegiance.

Earl. (*Taking the book.*) Poor child! the author of the book
you laud,
This limner of the mind's fantastic dreams,
Long ere old age found his art profitless,
Forswore his troth to fancy, — and died rich.

Mabel. His book is henceforth sealed to eyes of mine.
O, how degraded is the venal soul
Chartered by its Creator to be free,
Yet putting on the great world's livery,
Not the less menial for its golden fringe!

Earl. Thou art enthusiastic, my fair girl!
I blame thee not; those who aspire too high
Rest nearer heaven than those who ne'er aspired.
I love thee, Mabel.

Thou summost up for me all human ties
 Save those which link me to my country's weal.
 Thy mother lives in thee, and in some sort
 Thou art my age's bride as well as daughter ;
 To lose thee were a second widowhood.
 My only child ! sole tenant of the heart
 Thy brothers, did they live, would share with thee.

Mabel. (Embracing him.) O, my dear lord and father, well I know

Your love, your patient and forgiving love,
 To your oft wayward Mabel ! Sir, your will
 Shall guide me in this matter ; but command,
 And I will wed Sir Everard.

*Earl. At no command unsanctioned by thy heart
 Would I require thee wed ; yet would I speak
 Of poor Sir Everard a word or two,
 And leave to time and thy own heart the judgment.
 He loves thee well, is generous and kind.*

Mabel. He is most kind ; he is most generous.

*Earl. And though he be no genius, hath fine taste
 In arts that charm a woman's eye and ear ;
 Hath an accomplished mind and graceful bearing.*

Mabel. That all who know Sir Everard will confess.

Earl. Is rich.

Mabel. He has the broadest lands in Warwickshire.

Earl. And has the one great requisite — high birth.

*Mabel. Most true ; and yet I hope, possessing these,
 He has no more than I ; for generous,
 I trust, I am, and riches and descent
 I know we have, surpassing even his own.*

*Earl. And holdest thou these things of light account !
 Methinks they should be potent arguments.*

*Mabel. True ; but the heart ne'er guides its choice by logic.
 There is nought *rational* in love ; it hath,
 Above all reason, high prerogative.
 Who is there that hath loved because he *ought* ?
 The meet, the proper, and the dutiful
 Belong to the head's lore ; above all rule
 Is the heart's passion, gushing like a stream,
 In its exuberant nature finding law
 For all it doth, and pouring oft, alas !
 Its unblessed course along the wilderness
 Which reason would have taught it to avoid.*

*Earl. Then Mabel is in love ; for never, sure,
 Was one who valued reason less than she.*

(EARL rises, comes forward, R. H., MABEL, L. H.)

*Mabel. Not so ; for, although reason makes not love,
 Love may consist with reason ; am I right ?
 Now, if you grant me audience, I will
 Possess you of my secret thoughts, till now
 Nursed in the solitude of my own heart.*

He whom my will shall for its king elect
 Must bring me something more than that I have ;
 Women who marry seldom act but once ;
 Their lot is, ere they wed, obedience
 Unto a father ; thenceforth to a husband ;
 But in the *one* election which they make,
 Choice of a mate for life and death, and heaven,
 They may be said to *act*. The man they wed
 Is as the living record of the deed,
 Their one momentous deed. If he be base,
 It veils their deed with shame ; if he be great,
 Encircles it with glory ; and if good,
 Haloes it with religion. Wouldst thou know
 Whom I would have to be *my* husband, sire ?
 In brief terms I will sketch him. He shall be
 High born ; handsome, I'd rather, but at least
 With features lit up by the sacred light
 Which marks the elect band of noble men,
 Whose history is the world's, and whose high names,
 Linked close with empires, sound their synomynes ;
 With eye that quails not in the war ; with voice
 That thrills the popular ear, and o'erawes senates ;
 And of a wide, ceaseless benevolence,
 Bounded but by the walls of the great world ;
 And O, whene'er affection breathed his name,
 Or mind did homage to it, should my heart
 Rush back to the bright hour when first I chose him,
 Saying it was *my act* !

Earl. Well, well, my sweet one ! all I would require
 Is, that the proffered love you cannot take,
 You should put back with thoughtful gentleness.
 I censure not your nature. Some there be,
 Of a romantic spirit like your own,
 Have thought all decencies chimerical,
 And plighted faith to rude, plebeian swains,
 That they might thereby show contempt of station,
 And all that wisdom holds inviolate :
 But this from you I fear not ; you have been
 Nurtured too well ; you are too much my daughter.

Mabel. You do me justice, sir ; nor think that I
 Will e'er disgrace our lineage ; whom I wed
 High in descent, noble in mind, shall be.

Earl. Thou art my best beloved ; but leave me now —
 (EARL goes to chair, R. H., at table ; MABEL prepares to go off
 through centre doors.)

Stay, Mabel ; one word more with thee ! To-morrow
 A visitor named Mordaunt tarries here ;
 Perchance a week or twain, as it may be.
 Show him all kindness ; though of obscure birth,
 He is no common man — may serve me much.

Mabel. (By EARL's side.) Mean you *the* Mordaunt ?

Earl. I did not know his fame had risen so high

As to make him *the* Mordaunt; but I think
We mean the same man; he whose eloquence
Hath stirred the commons so.

Mabel. My Mordaunt is a poet.

Earl. True! he has

That failing, I believe, and 'tis a great one
In public men; but time will cure him on't.

Mabel. Fie, fie, my lord! Do we not mourn when time
Plants wrinkles on the brow? and shall we joy
When his touch chills the freshness of the heart?
For such is poetry.

Earl. Be it so, chit! (*Rises and comes forward, R. H.*)
I'll not contest the point; as to this stranger,
Let his reception be most courteous; (*Crosses to L. H.*)
I would we could persuade aunt Lydia
To doff her stateliness for some few days;
It must be looked to, let us seek her, sweet.

Mabel. With all my heart; — *the* Mordaunt! I am ready.

(*Exeunt c. D. L. H.*)

SCENE II. — MORDAUNT'S HOUSE.

Enter COLVILLE, DEANCOURT, MORDAUNT, HEARTWELL, and LISTER,
c. D., down R. H. and L. H.

Dean. Decide for one of us.

Col. (R. C.) My yacht's the thing!
After your labors you need change of scene —
Almost of element, which you shall have
When, the dull land forgotten, our light skiff
The Mediterranean skims.

Dean. There's nothing beats
A good old English house — the morning rides;
A sweep, perchance, o'er hill and hedge to sound
Of the enlivening bugle; then at night,
The merry party, and the bright fireside;
The good old games and stories.

Heart. Gentlemen,
Duties are sometimes pleasures. Perhaps Mordaunt
May hold the cares of public life too dear
To wish a respite, though it be recess.

Lister. We cannot spare him from us.

Col. I will take no answer but his own.

Dean. Nor I!

Mor. (C.) Good friends,
Hold me excused, I pray you. Were my *will*
To arbitrate this matter, I would go
Delightedly with both; but, as it is,
I stand engaged already to Heartwell. That reminds me [apart.)
To ask your eye for this. (*Presenting a letter which Heartwell reads*)

Dean. If it be so

There's nothing left but to regret your absence,
And wish you well in ours. Farewell till spring.

Col. Adieu, dear Mordaunt.

Mor. Heaven be with you, friends.

Lister. I'll walk with you.

Mor. What! all take flight together?

Heart. No; I'll stay in very pity to your solitude.

(To the others.) I trust ere you leave London we shall meet.

(*Exeunt LISTER, COLVILLE, and DEANCOURT, R.* HEARTWELL
carelessly folds up and returns the letter. MORDAUNT *brings down chairs.*)

I had expected this; you are a prize
To him who shall have wit to capture you;
But who is he? Not this complacent earl!
This sleek and courteous earl! You must have smiled,
My Edgar, at each gracious period.
He has a high esteem for you, forsooth!
Admires your views, your mind's great scope!
And though he sees in all your daring plans
Unsoundness, here and there temerity,
He has a marvellous respect for them,
And being at this moment respite
From cares of state, some portion of his leisure
He'd have your sweet society engross!
Well, in what terms was your denial couched?

Mor. (r. h.) Denial! On what grounds should I refuse
Such kindly tendered courtesy?

Heart. I did not think thine eye, so quick to pierce
Public hypocrisy through all the glare
With which convention decks it, could have been
Dazzled by one man's hollow compliment;
I charge thee, spurn this specious show of friendship.

Mor. Why call it specious, ere you prove it so?

Heart. If you seek evidence that would convict,
According to the strictest forms of law,
This man of guile, why, I have none to give;
But on plain likelihood and inference
My censure rests. Mark me! two years ago
Had any to another breathed thy name,
His fellow had made question, "Of whom speak you?"
"What hath he writ, said, done, or in what way
Approved himself?" and had he been informed
Of thy capacity, not then confirmed
By the world's attestation, he had cried,
Less in encouragement than mockery,
"One of your rising men! Town's full of them."
But now thou art a theme of public talk —
A name not only metropolitan,
But known in every district of the isles.

Mor. Thanks for your eulogy; but whither tends it?

Heart. Faith! to this:

Minds of thine order come not every year,
 Nor are they grown in clusters ; instruments
 Of power ! if they be true, of destiny !
 Apostles to their age ! the virtuous
 Hail them as saviours, while the common herd
 Of coward knaves grow paralyzed with fear,
 Expectant that their day is passing hence !
 Now, while the issues undetermined hang
 Between the just and base, if one step forth,
 Wily, and smooth of speech, and can arrest
 The great man's march a moment, turn his eye
 Upon the glitter of some costly bribe,
 It may be that he spurns it, and it *may* be
 That he becomes Iscariot to his cause.

Mor. Nay ; speak out, if you would call me traitor !

Heart. I mean not so to name you. I do but say
 Beware the subtle courtier.

Mor. The grounds
 Of your suspicion ? Why do you condemn him ?

Heart. Is he not the sworn foe of our party ?

Mor. I have no party. (*Both rise.*)

Heart. Rapidly the poison works ; and yet it is not strange
 That one so loving to his party's foe
 Should soon disclaim his old associates.

Mor. Where is your warrant, sir,
 To bait me thus ? I say I have no party.
 You and your friends of late have striven hard
 For certain end which I approved ; 'twas fit
 That I should aid you — so far travel with you,
 As one road served us both. Therefore have I
 Entered in league with you ? or am I bound
 To follow where your trumpet blows, and fight
 With whom you list to bid me ? Have I sworn
 To shut my eyes to all the greatness grows
 In one half of the empire ? That's the oath
 Ta'en by the partisan. (*Crosses, L. H.*)

Heart. You speak right loftily. Perchance your speech
 May couch itself in humbler tones when meant
 For the earl's ear.

Mor. Sir, I have known you long ; respected you ;
 And it may be have served you heretofore ;
 And not on slight occasion would I wear
 The stranger's carriage to you ; but take heed.
 You speak as if I were a parasite,
 A hireling, an apostate : had my *father*
 Broached such surmise of me, it had gone far
 In recollection of that one dishonor,
 To merge all kinder memory.

Heart. I seek your love
 No longer than pure friendship's elements
 Are fruitful in your nature. Let me ask

If it be meet if one like you should wait
 For an occasional condescending smile
 From this proud nobleman ; or haply make,
 Through ignorance of unaccustomed forms,
 Mirth for his haughty daughter. But your pardon.
 Perchance you aim at greatness, and will deign
 Honor the Lady Mabel with your hand.

Mor. Peace, sir. Your language holds not with my mood.
 By all report upon the face of earth,
 No fairer nor more noble creature moves
 Than this same Lady Mabel ; for the rest,
 The man who hath credentials in his soul,
 Avouching its immortal ancestry,
 Presumes but little, even if he seek
 Alliance with the proudest of the earth.
 Is it your creed, sir, that in righteous scales
 The name outweighs the man ? Shame on such doctrine .

(Crosses to R.)

Heart. Nay, shame on thee, who dar'st thus to upbraid
 An age 'tis fit that thou shouldst venerate !
 Farewell, sir ! Should we ever meet again,
 It will be in that deepest of all strangeness
 Which grows 'twixt those who have loved *once*, and love not.

(Exit HEARTWELL, R. H. 1 E.)

Mor. So friendship passes. Well, I will not seek
 A heart to rule in, if affection's sway
 Depend on paying dues to interest.
 I'll not believe that Heartwell judged aright.
 This noble means me fairly — will not dare
 To use me for his tool. Yet, if he do —
 O, if he do ! — my heart heaves at the thought,
 So that I fear and quake before myself.
 There is within me that quick sense of shame
 Which, being stung, would spur me on to vengeance,
 Although the path were fire ! And I have, too,
 That in my nature which would make me slave
 To genuine kindness. I'll deal with the world
 As the world deals with me, — if well, its friend, —
 If otherwise, — but for the day, 'tis said,
 Sufficient is the evil.

(Exit R. H. 1 E.)

ACT II.

SCENE I. — *Handsome Drawing Room in Lynterne Castle.*
MORDAUNT discovered.

Mor. Rumor has not o'erdrawn her. She is rich
 In beauty, and in that which passeth beauty,

Or is, perchance, its source — a glorious soul.
 I've known her but a month, and yet she seems,
 As their own light, familiar to mine eyes.
 Would that I
 Were sprung of loftly lineage. That's unworthy.
 Was not my father tender, constant, upright?
 And shall I wrong his homely, honest virtues
 By vain repinings at my humble lot?
 Heaven sees not with our eyes. That's well at least.

Enter MABEL, c. d. l. h. down l. h., in a fashionable morning dress, with fancy work.

Mabel. Bright morrow to you, sir! 'Tis a fair change
 From last eve's tempest.

(About to take chair; MORDAUNT puts it forward; MABEL seated on l. h.; MORDAUNT stands on r. h.)

Mor. 'Twas a stormy eve.

Mabel. And yet I never knew a briefer one.
 For that I must thank you, and the sweet tale,
 In listening which the hours like minutes sped

Mor. Thank you, lady:

Mabel. Yet I somewhat marvel
 That you, whose life is chiefly dedicate
 To grave state policy, should yet beguile
 Your leisure with the poet's simple art.

Mor. What is the end of all true policy, if it be not
 To work out poetry in act? to feel
 A deep and constant love for human kind;
 A sense of beauty's presence, not alone
 In lofty show, but in its latent haunts,
 Which few investigate — the humble hut
 And bosom meanly clad; worship of justice;
 The warm emotions of an unchecked nature,
 Which rises, as by instinct, against wrong:
 These are the elements of poetry.
 Is that man fit to be a statesman, think you,
 Whose heart is stranger to them?

Mabel. After I retired,
 Your tale dwelt on my mind, moved me to tears —
 Those sweet and tender tears that speak not pain,
 But soothe whoever sheds them. In my dreams
 The maid whose fate you told was present still.
 O, would that I had lived in ancient days,
 The times of old romance! Do you not think
 I should have been a heroine?

Mor. Why not be one now?

Mabel. There is no scope for it. (*Crosses, l. h.*)
 O, would that I had been the worshipped one
 Of some devoted Troubadour, half knight,

Half minstrel. My sire, a baron,
 Irascible and proud, perchance commands
 That I forswear my troth. I cannot do it.
 Straight in some chamber, tapestried and lone,
 I am confined, armed guards before my door.
 I pen a *billet*. O, sweet traveller,
 Into whose care these tidings, from the hand
 Of an unhappy maid, shall come, haste thee
 To Sieur — “ De Lacy,” — that shall be his name, —
 And tell him in this castle’s eastern tower
 His Eleanora lies a prisoner —
 For his dear love. I drop my scroll ; its words
 Are borne to my brave Troubadour. Some night,
 While I sit gazing at the placid moon,
 Soft music floats
 Around my lattice — quick I open it !
 O, joy ! 'tis he ! — he scales the wall, secures,
 Fast by the casement, his elastic stair
 Which straightway I descend — I’m on the earth —
 I’m on my steed : away ! away we fly !
 I and my Troubadour, (*crosses R. H.*;) and in the morn
 My hand rewards my brave deliverer !
 What think you, sir, is not my tale well told ?
 It is my first attempt. You do not smile !

Mor. Alas, sweet lady ! mournful thoughts were mine.

Mabel. Why mournful ?

Mor. Your tale is blithe, and goes off trippingly :
 I make no question of your constancy,
 Your enterprise, your courage ; but methinks
 You scarce had borne the part you paint so well.

Mabel. Wherefore not ? O for one year
 Of the romantic past, that I might prove
 Myself, in your despite, a heroine. (*Takes chair, R. H.*)

Mor. I have known heroines in this modern time, —
 Ay, there are homesteads which have witnessed deeds
 That battle fields, with all their bannered pomp,
 Have little to compare with. Life’s great play
 May, so it have an actor great enough,
 Be well performed upon a humble stage.

Mabel. Your discourse goes far to make me look with kinder eyes
 Upon the present time.

Mor. The *forms* of the heroic change from age to age ;
 The *spirit of the forms* remains the same :
 Your heroine of old, in love’s behalf,
 Would dare imprisonment and venture flight,
 Though near her files of lances were arrayed.
 Your modern heroine, in love’s behalf,
 Will often dare hostility as dread.
 Not seldom you will meet a maiden whose heart
 Was pledged to one of lowly heritage,
 But of high qualities, that well atoned

The churlish lot of Fortune. Enmity
 From haughty parents, exile from the sphere
 Had been her own from birth, chill penury,
 And other ills as weighty, have conspired
 Against her love, and yet she has avowed it,
 And cherished it as life. O Lady Mabel —

Mabel. Why do you pause?

Mor. I fear I weary you.

Mabel. O, no, for such a heroine —

Mor. What would you say of her?

Mabel. That albeit she had acted indiscreetly;
 For the high love that caused her so to act,
 She should be gently censured — not cast out.

Mor. And her lover?

Mabel. Nay, I know not what to say of him.

Mor. I knew a lover once (*takes chair, L. H.*)
 Whose heart had poured its riches at the shrine
 Of one whose lot ranked higher than his own,
 In the wise world's esteem; and this he knew,
 Yet could he not recall to his lone breast
 The feelings thence allured. She was their home,
 And — all beside was foreign.

Mabel. And she loved him?

Mor. His love was silent, and dared scarce intrude
 Upon her sight. He prayed for her — he blessed her —
 He wept for her; but she heard not his words,
 Nor saw his tears; for they were breathed and shed
 In sacred solitude. He thought of angels
 Who nightly to the sleeper's couch repair,
 But vanish ere he wakens.

Mabel. Did he not lay his heart open to her?

Mor. As I said, he was of lower rank than she, and feared
 That she might scorn him.

Mabel. Scorn such fervent worship?

Had she so done, *she* were the thing to scorn.

Mor. You had not spurned him, then?

Mabel. I cannot dream

What I have said to move you. O, this friend!

'Tis like you loved him as a very brother,

And own a debt to all who pity him.

Your story interests. How ended it?

And was this long since?

Mor. It is very strange.

I cannot call the time to mind. I know

The truth of what I tell, but nothing more.

Enter the EARL and LADY LYDIA, c. d. l. h.

Lydia. (R. H.) Not out yet, Mabel? Should you thus permit
 The freshness of the morning to escape?
 It counts three hours since noon.

Mabel. Is it so late? — (*To Mordaunt.*) Do you ride with us, sir? (*To the Earl.*) And you? You must; I know you will; these are your holidays.

Earl. (L. H.) I may not, sweetest.

Mabel. No! — (*To Mordaunt.*) You then will be Our single cavalier.

Earl. I fear, dear Mabel, I must assert a prior claim to Mordaunt. We've themes of pressing import to discuss.

Mabel. (r. c.) 'Tis very late. I will not ride to-day.

Lydia. You will.

Mabel. I think you said that it was late.

Lydia. (*Aside to Mabel.*) Go for my sake.

Mabel. Well, if it please you, aunt.

Earl. Adieu! (*Going.*)

Mor. A pleasant morning.

Lydia. Thank you, thank you.

(*Exeunt EARL and MORDAUNT, C. D. L. H.* LADY LYDIA walks after them, and then advances to R. H. of MABEL, who is seated in centre.)

Lydia. Mabel, you love that man!

Mabel. Love whom? Sir Everard?

Lydia. This is evasion.

I know you have refused Sir Everard; I say you love this Mordaunt.

Mabel. I fail to comprehend you.

Lydia. Wilt deny it?

Mabel. (*Haughtily rises from chair.*) It doth not need denial Edgar Mordaunt!

Lydia. Pardon me!

I did but jest. I knew you loved him not; It was impossible, for he hath nought In station, fortune, or in qualities That can excite esteem, far less affection.

Mabel. O, now methinks you are somewhat harsh.

Lydia. Harsh! would you have me patient in my speech? I am beside myself to see a man

Whose birth had fitted well a servitor
'Thus licensed to invade patrician's bounds,
And wearing in them the familiar air
Of one injured to dignity!

Mabel. Good aunt, men three relations hold to dignity: By gradual use some grow inured to it, And some are born to it; but there be those Born of it, nurtured of its elements; With them nobility is personal, And they must die ere it can.

Lydia. In which rank place you Mordaunt?

Mabel. In the last.

Lydia. What fantasy hath sealed thine eyelids close! Canst thou not read the obvious history

Of an ambitious and time-serving man ?
 What doth he here who was thy father's foe
 Upon all public questions ? Trust ~~me~~, Mabel,
 He is of those who, by exciting speech
 And persevering effort, make their names
 Of value in the mart of policy,
 And sell them to the man who offers most.

Mabel. Madam, 'tis false — his heart is virtue's home,
 His deeds her witnesses — O, foully false ! (Crosses to R. H.)

Lydia. This is unmaidenly and insolent !
 Does no shame flush thy cheek ? or wherefore is it
 Thou shouldst forget all deference to me
 In favor of a stranger ?

Mabel. Because *he* is a stranger,
 And has no friend to spurn back calumny,
 When those whose guest he is forget the rights
 Owing to hospitality and justice. (Crosses to L. H. *Throws herself into chair in L. H.*)

Lydia. Under pretence of what is due to justice
 Your passion flaunts it bravely :
 Henceforth suit your bearing
 More to the decent, less to the fantastic,
 Or I will to your father, and require
 His comment on your conduct.

Mabel. Do you threaten ? (Rises.)

Lydia. Ay ! threaten. Wherefore not ?

Mabel. I am amazed you can, so strange it seems
 That you, whose words suffice to show what you are,
 Should dare rebuke what I am.
 I wonder not you value station so :
 It is but a poor treasure in itself,
 Yet becomes rich when 'tis the sole possession.

Lydia. (Aside.) I have gone too far. Mabel, could you have
 looked
 Into my heart, you would have spared me this.

Mabel. (Crosses to L. C.) Could you have sounded mine, I do
 not think
 You would have ventured to this length of insult. (Retires to table,
 L. H. up a little.)

Lydia. Insult ! Mabel ! And is your father's sister's love so
 strange,
 That when it would advise you, guard you, save you,
 You should miscall it thus ? Perhaps my zeal
 Took an impatient tone, but did not need
 The deep rebuke it suffered.

Mabel. (Coming to her.) I have been wrong, dear aunt ! but still
 I say,

You judge poor Mordaunt harshly.

Lydia. I think he is ambitious.

Mabel. What's he that is not so ? Ambition, aunt,

Is instinct in great minds, even as to soar
Is nature to the eagle.

Lydia. This plausible and general reasoning, however just,
Meets not the special instance ; beside all which, but note
How much he adds, by glances, motions, sighs,
Smiles, even casts of visage, to his words,
Which, as I lately said, your eyes reward
With interest more than maidenly.

Mabel. Nay, gentle aunt,
I am not carved from stone, and cannot hear
Music without emotion, nor unmoved
Look on a flower, or aught that's beautiful ;
And must I, when a glowing sentiment
Or noble thought finds utterance, emulate
The barren rock that never pays the sun
With produce for his smiles ? O, blame me not,
If at discourse on themes magnificent
My eyes light up with joy ! They testify
Love to the speaker's thoughts, not to *himself*.

Lydia. The speaker will not make that nice distinction ;
And, to be plain, he has sufficient cause
To augur that.

Mabel. That I esteem, admire him ;
I will not wrong him so as to surmise
He would aspire to more. He knows my rank ;
But let us hasten, 'tis so *very* late.
I trust we're friends again. You'll follow me.

(*Exit LADY MABEL, C. D. L. H.*)

Lydia. Esteem and admiration ! likely terms
To cozen me, forsooth ! No ; this is love,
And has gone further than I thought. This Mordaunt
Is a right skilful player on the heart :
That praise I'll give him. He must read success —
Success in the girl's face, which, like a mirror, shows
The image of his thoughts. Should this proceed,
No motives, counsel, prayer, threat, influence,
Will stand between her and her love. Well, then,
I and this schemer are at war ! I'll watch
His demonstrations one more week ; if then
He purpose longer stay, I'll in plain terms
Urge his departure ; if he still remain,
I'll move him to disclosure of his end
Before it ripen further, and thus shake,
In spring, the blossoms autumn had seen fruit.

(*Exit LADY LYDIA, C. D. L. H.*)

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*A Terrace in front of Lynterne Castle. Evening; half dark.*

Enter MORDAUNT, R. H.

Mor. How beautiful are all things when we love !
 She I love is human ; and through Nature's wide extent
 All that is human, for her sake, I love.
 Our planet earth is her abode ; for her sake I love earth,
 And for earth's sake love all that earth contains.
 O, it is great, and wise, and good to love !
 What joy it is to love ! And loves she me ?
 She listens to my words, and seldom speaks.
 First it was otherwise ; her repartee,
 Quick wit, and lively sallies flashed all day ;
 Her answers now are few and brief, as though
 The task of ordering her thoughts for speech
 Woke her from blissful dreams ; my soul itself
 Seemed suffused in her presence, bathed in light,
 As plants beneath the solemn, tender moon,
 Which gilds their life with beauty, as she mine,
 And joys in heaven to see their silvered leaves,
 Unknowing 'tis her smile that make their brightness,
 Which fades from earth whene'er she wanes in heaven.

Enter LADY LYDIA, L. H. 1 E.

A cloud comes over mine. Lo ! Lady Lydia !
 I trust you find the evening breeze refresh you.

Lydia. A debtor to your wishes, sir ! I thank you.

(Crosses, R. H.)

(Aside.) I'll not delay, for opportunity,
 Once slighted, oft escapes. When do you leave us ?

Mor. (L. H.) Shortly. Perhaps within a week or two,
 Provided for that time my sojourn prove
 No inconvenience here.

Lydia. (R. H.) I fear it will.

Mor. Had I thought so, you had not seen me now.

Lydia. I will be plain, sir.

Plainness is always the best courtesy,
 Where truths are to be told. You still are young,
 And want not personal grace ; your air, your words
 Are such as captivate. You understand me.

Mor. I do not ; for these things most men seek to harbor guests.

Lydia. True, except sometimes

When they are fathers. You are honorable,
 And what has passed will leave us straight.

Mor. I scarcely dare presume to give your words
 Their nearest meaning.

Lydia. Yet you may do so.

Mor. The Lady Mabel!

Lydia. Yes.

Mor. Looks not on me indifferently.

Lydia. That you will join me in regretting, sir.

Mor. And have you certain warrant for your thought?

Lydia. She has confessed it.

Mor. In your hearing?

Lydia. You are minute, I see, and well may doubt,
Except on surer witness than surmise,
So strange a tale. Alas! the evidence
Courts sight and touch. I hold it in my hand—
This letter! (*Mordaunt regards her inquiringly.*) Nothing—(*as with a sudden impulse.*) I dare trust your honor.

This letter, then, — sweet patience! — by my niece
Addressed to me, doth full disclosure bear
Of her hid passion.

Mor. Writ to you?

Lydia. You doubt. (*Showing the address.*)
Her lips refused allegiance to her will,
Which made her hand its deputy. Behold! (*Extending the letter.*)

Mor. Her love for me! The glory on the page
Dazzles mine eyes.

Lydia. (*Withdrawing it.*) Forgive me: 'tis too much.

(*Tears it.*)

Thus let the winds disperse the signs of shame.

(*Throws it off, R. H.*)

'Twould be most happy, were its memory
As easily effaced.

Mor. Your hand hath rent
The record; but your voice transfers its purport
To the more lasting tablet of my heart!
I'll seek her on the instant. (*Going, L. H.*)

Lydia. (*Aside.*) That, indeed,
Would mar my plan. No; silence is your course:
It is most delicate, least painful, too.
No word were well, save farewell, and that said
As those who have no long acquaintance say it.

Mor. I will not say it so to the Lady Mabel, now,
Or ever, unless it be her will.

Lydia. You would not surely take
Advantage of her weakness. Do not, sir,
Let it be thought that we, in welcoming you,
Shook hands with an adventurer.

Mor. (*Indignantly.*) Madam! (*with constrained courtesy.*) you
are her relative, and I am dumb. (*Going to L. H.*)

Lydia. Stay. Think you the earl's voice will not crush your
plan

The moment that surprise permitted speech?

Mor. Why should it?

Lydia. Must I speak outright?

Mor. Surely.

Lydia. The house of Lynterne
Dates from the time that he of Normandy
O'erthrew the Saxon sway ; since then, its lords,
In war or peace, have held the foremost rank
In conflict or in council. Sir, our house
Is noble — must remain so till its *end*.

Mor. Is not yon sunset splendid ?

Lydia. Yes.

But we may see that often, and it bears
Not now on our discourse.

Mor. Indeed it does.

However proud, or great, or wise, or valiant
The Lady Mabel's ancestors, that sun,
From age to age, has watched their honors end,
As man by man fell off ; and centuries hence
Yon light unto oblivion may have lit
As many stately trains as now have passed.
And yet my soul, orb of eternity,
When yonder globe is ashes, as your sires,
Shall shine on undecaying. When men know
What their own natures are, and feel what God
Intended them to be, they are not awed
By pomps the sun outlives.

Lydia. Think of me, as your friend, when you are gone.
You have a towering spirit. Had the rank
And blood of Lady Mabel been as yours,
I had not said a word to spite your wish.

Mor. You see this ring ?

Lydia. I have admired it oft. Would you thus hint
That you are rich ?

Mor. Is not the setting precious ?

Lydia. The diamond is magnificent !

Mor. True, madam ! But the setting —

Lydia. The diamond is the treasure.

Mor. No ! the setting !

Lydia. The setting is but silver, worthless, base,
Contrasted with the stone.

Mor. True, Lady Lydia !

Then when I treat for merchandise would buy
All stars of heaven up, were they diamond worlds, —
A peerless woman's love, — why runs your phrase,
" You might have had that unmatched gem for nought
Had it not been so *set* " in ancestry,
Or some such silver rim ? But enough —
Enough — now to Lady Mabel. (*Going, L.*)

Lydia. Let me advise.

If you persist in this strange scheme, seek, first,
An audience of the earl ; if he consent,
The which is most unlikely, Mabel's love
Is honorably yours ; if he refuse,

You incur no disgrace, as you would do
Luring his daughter's heart unknown to him.

Mor. I take your counsel. The earl is in the library even now. I'll learn his thoughts at once.

Lydia. I pity you. It will be a hard task for your high spirit To sue the earl in such a humble strain as will be requisite.

Mor. Humble! I — Mordaunt !

Lydia. Your ground is delicate ; you must be cautious ; Confess your low estate, and own the prize You seek to gain far beyond your desert ; You must put by your recent haughty tone And kingly glances ; plead with downcast eye And hesitating voice ; all this, I say, must keenly Gall your nature ; therefore I pity you.

Mor. I were indeed a slave, And needing pity, could I so forget My manhood ; but enough, methinks, is said To one who knows me not. (*Exit, 1 E. L. H.*)

Lydia. O, this is well ! He'll to my brother in a haughty mood — The very one I wished for. 'Twill arouse All the earl's latent pride. And now for Mabel. Upon the wish she comes. (*Retires up stage.*) ;

Enter LADY MABEL, R. H. 1 E., with bonnet, scarf, and parasol ; comes on with eyes bent on ground, slowly, in thought.

Mabel. Why have not noble natures noble names ? Or why are names of import ? O world ! world ! With many a captious custom dost thou bind The heart that seeks enlargement ! What is birth ! Even my father Seeks his alliance. What is this to me ? A line invisible divides our fates ! O, would that he had rank ! The day may come When he will earn nobility, and men Of prouder birth may court his smile ; and then, Perchance, (for love is strong,) I might descend A few steps from my pinnacle. Fool ! fool ! This is a dream of summer and of youth. I know not my own soul ; 'tis ardent now, But years may chill it into apathy. Why not ? 'Tis thus with others ; I could weep.

Lydia. So, you've been secret, Mabel ! 'Twas hardly kind ; but I waive all displeasure ; I trust you may be happy.

Mabel. This is strange language, aunt.

Lydia. I might reply, yours is strange conduct, nice. But let that pass. The earl was silent too, but I Surmise he understood it all ; perhaps had Planned it before his guest arrived.

Mabel. Tax not my patience thus, but in one word
Explain your meaning.

Lydia. Why counterfeit surprise? Know you not well
Mordaunt is with the earl this very hour?

Mabel. Well, what is that to me?

Lydia. Much, I should say,
Were I now young, in love, and knew what boon
The man I loved was seeking from my sire.

Mabel. You jest.

Lydia. I am in earnest. He had your consent,
Doubtless, to back his prayer.

Mabel. No; never.

Lydia. Not in strict, formal terms, perhaps, but still
By such expressions as the timid use
To help the lip's checked utterance by the eye.

Mabel. I never spoke the word Presumption's self
Could torture to a pledge of love for him.

Lydia. I am amazed! it is not half an hour
Since his own lips assured me that the earl
Must needs confirm his choice.

Mabel. Presuming arrogance! (*Crosses to L. H.*)

Lydia. He spoke in easy strain,
His air, half buoyancy, half carelessness,
As though success were slave to him, and came
Without the pains of calling.

Mabel. What sanction have I given him thus to boast?

Lydia. I warned you once to guard, lest what you meant
For courtesy he should interpret love.

Mabel. In word or look I never passed the bound of courtesy.

Lydia. Did you not tell me, Mabel, that the earl
Requested special kindness for this man?

Mabel. What man? (*With sudden indignation.*)

Lydia. This gentleman, this Mordaunt, at whose hands
The earl looked for some service. Am I right?

Mabel. Yes! so he said.

Lydia. Nothing is more plain than
That your father seeks some grace of Mordaunt
Which he intends to sell — the price, your hand.
How now! you shiver!

Mabel. The earl shall spurn him. (*Crosses, R. H.*) Buy my
hand, said you?

Lydia. You may depend he means it. (*Crosses L. H.*)

Mabel. Why is your tone so measured, and your brow
So clear on this occasion? Where's the fire
That should be in your eyes? Your temper's sweet;
But now I like it not, I like it not. (*Weeps.*)

Lydia. I cannot chide, if under quick excitement at your
Wrong, you are unjust to me. A step! (*Enter SERVANT, R. H. 1 E.*)

What now?

Ser. Madam, my lord would see you and the Lady
Mabel; he waits you in the library. (*Exit, 1 E. N.*)

Lydia. Come, Mabel; take heart, sweet.

Mabel. (Crossing, R.) What is there that I should fear?
Let us be going, aunt. (Exeunt, l. E. R. H.)

SCENE II.—*Library, as before. The EARL and MORLAUNT discovered.*

Mor. Is love a crime?

Can we prevent its coming? or when come,
Can we command it from us?

Earl. We may, at least, curb its expression,
When disgrace and grief are like to follow it.

Mor. Disgrace! Your daughter's noble, fair, and good;
I shall not feel disgraced in taking her.

Earl. Sir! You are insolent. (Takes chair.)

(Enter LADY MABEL and LADY LYDIA, c. d. l. H.)

Mabel, my child, have I not loved you truly,
Shown all kindness that is a daughter's due?

Mabel. Indeed, my lord, you have. (L. H. of EARL.)

Earl. Have you done well
In making stranger to a father's heart
The dearest wish of yours?—in plighting faith
For life, unknown to him who gave you life? (der.)

Mabel. This have I never done. (Leaning on her father's shoul-

Mor. Speak frankly; have you not, Lady Mabel, given me proof
Of favor in your sight will justify
The boon I have entreated of the earl—
Permission to be ranked as one who looks
For closer union with you than a friend? Answer, Mabel.

Mabel. Mabel! the Lady Mabel, when *you* speak.

Lydia. (L. H.) She utterly denies what you infer.

Mabel. Yes, utterly.

Mor. And Lady Lydia speaks thus; she whose words
Confirmed all I once hoped?

Lydia. We think you but presumptuous; let your honor
Guard you from veiling shame by sin; nor strive
From loose discourse, spoken in pleasantry,
To justify your conduct.

Mor. And the letter?

Lydia. The letter! He's distraught.

Mabel. (Aside to LYDIA.) The letter! Aunt!

Lydia. Yes, love. (Going to MABEL.)

Mabel. No, no; I will not wrong her; it is plain
His folly has deceived him.

Mor. May I then ask, (LYDIA gets round to R. H.)
If you have never loved me, why you deigned
To speak in tones so soft, to let each glance
Be tempered with such sweetness; oftentimes
To sit mute by the hour, as if my words

Were music to your ear, and when I ceased,
To pay me with a smile, in which there seemed
A heart's whole volume writ?

Mabel. This is too much. (*Sits in chair, centre.*)
Whate'er my kindness meant, it did not mean
To foster your presumption, though, perhaps,
Suspecting it, and lacking at the time
Better employment, I allowed it scope,
Did not repress it harshly, and amused,
Rather than angered, failed to put a bound
To its extravagance.

Mor. All, then, has been a jest; the thing resolves
Itself into a harmless *bardinage*!
You had no other toy, so took my heart
To wile away an hour. The plaything *broke*;
But then it was *amusement*!

Lydia. Well, you were honored
In thus assisting to beguile the hours
Of Lady Mabel's solitude.

Mor. Honored, say you?
Men's hearts have leaped within them at my words.
The lowly have adored me, and the proud —
Ay, sir, the proud — have courted me; you know it.

Lydia. All this would sound much to your credit, sir,
Were other lips to speak it.

Mor. Understand me.
You deem me proud. I am so; and yet humble:
To you I would have been a slave; have moulded
Each wish to your desire; have laid my fame,
Though earth had ratified it, at your feet,
Nor deemed the offering worthy of your smile!
But when, admitting what I am, you scorn me
For what my father was, sport with me, trample
On the same hopes you fostered, then I claim
The patent which the Great Paternity
Of heaven assigns me as its elder born,
And walk before you in the march of time!

Lydia. The stale, fond trick — to boast of honors stored
In ether, where no human eye can pierce.
You may be prince of several stars — possess
An empire in the ocean. But the meanest knighthood
Conferred by a real sword on real shoulders,
Beats fifty thousand dukedoms in the air.
The old, convenient trick!

Earl. Nay, courtesy!

Lydia. To check the signs of loathing, it were best
The eye should shun the object. May we go?

Earl. Yes, leave me. (*MABEL rises, and they are going up centre.*)

Mor. Stay! Before we part, I have a word or two
For Lady Mabel's ear. (*MABEL returns to centre.*) I know right
well

The world has no tribunal to avenge
 An injury like mine ; you may allure
 The human heart to love, warm it with smiles,
 To aspirations of a dream-like bliss,
 From which to wake is madness ;
 And that very heart, brought to this pass,
 You may spurn from your path, pass on in jest,
 And the crowd will jest with you ; you may glide,
 With eye as radiant, and with brow as smooth,
 And feet as light, through your charmed worshippers,
 As though the angel's pen had failed to trace
 The record of your crime ; and every night,
 Lulled by soft flatteries, you may calmly sleep
 As do the innocent ; but it is crime,
 Deep crime, that you commit. Had you, for sport,
 Trampled upon the earth a favorite rose,
 Pride of the garden, or in wantonness
 Cast in the sea a jewel not your own,
 All men had held you guilty of offence.

Lydia. Is't meet that longer you should brook this censure ?

Mor. And is it then not sin
 To crush those flowers of life, our freshest hopes,
 With all the incipient beauty in the bud,
 Which knows no second growth ? to cast our faith
 In human kind, the only amulet
 By which the soul walks fearless through the world,
 Into those floods of memoried bitterness,
 Whose awful depths no diver dares explore ?
 To paralyze the expectant mind, while yet
 On the world's threshold, and existence' self
 To drain of all save its inert endurance ?
 To do this unprovoked, I ask it of you,
 Is it not sin ? To the unsleeping eye of Him
 Who sees all aims, and knows the wrongs
 No laws, save his, redress, I make appeal
 To judge between us. There's an hour will come,
 Not of revenge, but of righteous retribution.

Earl. Well, sir, our conference is ended.

Mor. Yes ; but its issues have yet to be revealed.

(*Exit, c. d. l. h.*)

Mabel. He is deceived ! He hears me not ! He knows me not !
 He's gone !

Earl. Why, what is this, dear Mabel ?

Mabel. (With a forced smile.) Nothing, sir.

I am not used, you know, to witness strife.
 It somewhat chafes my spirit.

Earl. Hither, love ! (Mabel reels forward, and falls into her father's arms.)

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*Same as Scene I. Act 3—An interval of five years is supposed to have elapsed between the third and fourth acts.*

Enter LISTER and HEARTWELL, L. H.

Lister. (R. H.) The marriage rites take place to-morrow morn !
Heart. (L. H.) So the earl purposes. His preparations

Are of such magnitude as to compete
 Almost with royal nuptials. It will be
 A gorgeous festival.

Lister. I did not think to see it.

Heart. For myself, I never looked within these ancient walls
 For welcome as guest, far less as one
 Summoned to Mordaunt's marriage.

Lister. It is strange, after the rumors bruited of his suit,
 And its vain issue, scarce five years ago,
 He should now have renewed it with success.
 Besides this, I had deemed his pride too great
 To brook his chance of scorn a second time.
 I well remember the affair was made
 A theme of public jest.

Heart. Yes. He became
 The gibe of every lisping fool, whose wit
 Had taught his lips to sneer, though scarce to speak.
 Poor Mordaunt ! They who envied his ascent
 Gloried in his disgrace, and prudent mothers
 Quoted his story to their heedless daughters —
 The moral of a fable meant to teach
 The vulgar crime of loving plain, bare merit :
 Scarce any one dared know him.

Lister. For all this he was indebted much to Lady Lydia ;
 And, as you say, I took him for a man
 Too proud to bear with insult. It amazed me
 To see him subject thus to general scoff,
 Calmly outbrave it, give his mind entire
 To public duties, daily gathering friends,
 Until his strength grew such, the earl preferred
 Concession rather than hostility,
 Admitted all our claims, procured him rank,
 Now takes him for his son. He showed no sign
 Of pain at this contempt ?

Heart. Save once, I think ;
 And then I tented him. "Good friend," said he,
 "That Edgar Mordaunt suffers wrong is little.
 He is not the first injured man by thousands ;
 But when I think that all who rise, like me,
 From lowly state, should be like me contemned,
 Whate'er their virtues be, I feel it there —

I feel it *there*." He grasped my hand ; his shook ;
 But this was for a moment. "Never, sir,
 Renew this theme." He thus entreated me.
 An instant served to banish every trace
 Of past emotion. The clear, resolute brow,
 The calm, yet searching eye, the lip just curved,
 His usual look — you know it well — returned.
 I probed the wound no more.

Enter LADY LYDIA and CAPTAIN PIERPONT, L. H.

Let us pass on. The Lady Lydia and her nephew come.
 Blithe weather for the festival, good madam.

Lydia. (R. H.) Fair as our brightest hopes are, gentlemen.

(*Exeunt HEARTWELL and LISTER, R. H. 1 E.*)

You know already these are the members of a factious clique.
 Mordaunt has brought to notice of the earl.

Pier. (L. H.) You bear this Mordaunt no better will, then,
 than I.

Lydia. I hate him, nephew. I foiled him once.
 I owe him

The hatred of the vanquished, besides that
 Which springs from shame, in calling relative
 A man without an ancestor.

Pier. I am poor, yet had I rather starved on soldier's pay
 Than thus disgraced my house, how great soe'er
 The bribe might have been tendered ; but, good aunt,
 I should have held your wit too quick to lose
 The conflict with this churl.

Lydia. I did all I could — strove to insinuate that Mabel's hand
 Rather obeyed her father's will than hers.
 Since I am conquered, nothing now remains
 Except to make the best on't.
 We'll hasten to the castle : 'tis the hour
 My brother named to read the marriage deed. (*About to go R. H.*)

Enter MABEL, L. H. 1 E.

Your pardon. I will follow you anon. (*She advances to meet MABEL.*)

(*Exit PIERPONT, R. H.*)

Nay, be of better cheer. Should one betrothed
 Upon her bridal eve look downcast thus ?
 There dwells a settled sadness on your brow
 I marked not ere this wooing. O my child !
 Carry it gayly ; go among your guests ;
 Be liberal of your smiles, free of your mirth,
 As one should be upon the verge of bliss.

Mabel. Believe me, I have striven to do my best,
 Nor quite in vain ; nay, heard you not yourself
 Our sprightly jests, as I led forth the train
 Through the wood's maze ? O, we were gay !

Lydia. I was not unobservant of your mirth ;
 It did not please me, Mabel ; it was strained,

Abrupt — wanted tranquillity ; your tones
 Were quicker than belonged to quiet joy ;
 Your smiles not such as *peace* serenely wears,
 But vanishing on sudden, as if hid
 By the dark shadow of some inward cloud,
 That would not be commanded to depart.

Mabel. You are right ; and I, it seems, am not so skilled
 As I had thought in artifice. Yes, aunt !
 There is a care lies heavy at my heart.

Lydia. I knew there was : confide your grief to me.

Mabel. I fear that time has changed him.

Lydia. Changed Sir Edgar !

Mabel. Ay : 'tis even so.

Lydia. Despite of which your love still perseveres ?

Mabel. True love, though tender, is immortal too —
 Easy to wound, incapable of death.

Not that he has at any time been harsh,
 At least in words ; but that to me seems stern
 Which others might not deem so. Public cares
 Leave him few hours for converse, and in those
 He speaks me formally. I know I'm blameful
 To tell you this ; but then I have no mother,
 Whose voice might solace weakness or reprove it.

Lydia. Alas ! Sweet niece, you merit better fate.

Mabel. Why say so, aunt ? I have in nought accused him,
 Except in change ; such change as comes like growth,
 Sure, but unnoted.

Lydia. I trust you kept my counsel, dearest child —
 Avoided all recurrence to the past.

Mabel. We have not spoken of it. Much I fear
 It steals upon his memory, and clouds
 The sunshine of his love.

Lydia. I would fain hope
 The best, dear Mabel. You did well at least
 In keeping silence ; but we shall be late.
 You know your father's wishes are to grace
 Your nuptials with all ceremony, whence
 This public reading of the marriage treaty.
 Would I could bribe those lips to smile. Come, love.

(*Exeunt LADY MABEL and LYDIA, R. 1 E.*)

Enter MORDAUNT, L. 1 E., looking after them.

Mor. 'Tis she. What sad reluctance in her step !
 The conscious victim in each gesture speaks.
 True, true, confirmed by many a certain sign,
 The Lady Lydia's tale. She loves me not,
 And curbs her loathing at her sire's behest !
 She turns within. What witchery of grace,
 Less seen than felt ! We know not where it dwells,
 Nor how it works ; but it doth work to *madness* !

Bright fascination, wanting only heart
 To make thee perfect. Thou that in the thrall
 Of fatal beauty didst my spirit bind,
 Delilah-like, to prostrate and betray ;
 Still, still there's magic to me in thy motions.
 Still find thy sighs their echoes in my heart's
 Reverberating ruins. Still thy voice
 Wakes a wild music from these jarring strings.
 Proud scorner ! I could love thee spite of scorn.
 Ill fits this mood the time. Hence, yielding self !
 No private interests now. The truth ! the right !
 Yea, though each syllable were coined in fire,
 And my own heart the furnace, I would speak
 My message. Haughty lady, heart, take heart !
 Fate yet may snatch thee from the base-born Mordaunt.

Enter SERVANT, R. 1 E.

Ser. My lord, sir, seeks your presence.
Mor. Does he so ? I will attend him instantly.
 I come. (*Exeunt MORDAUNT and SERVANT, R. 1 E.*)

SCENE II.—*Library, as before.* — EARL OF LYNTERNE, MORDAUNT, DEANCOURT, PIERPONT, COLVILLE, LADY LYDIA, MABEL, NOTARY, and WEDDING GUESTS *discovered.*

Earl. Good friends assembled here to confer honor
 Upon the near espousals, I beseech
 Your kind attention while this gentleman (*NOTARY rises.*)
 Reads in your hearing the accustomed deed
 Determining the rights and property
 Of such as stand affianced.

Mor. (R. c., *rising.*) My Lord Lynterne,
 And guests who grace us with your presence here,
 I've that to say, which 'twere unseasonable
 To broach at any later stage than this. (*NOTARY sits.*)
 Deem you not me much honored, who have sprung
 From lineage obscure, in this alliance
 With a most noble lady, who can trace
 An ancestry which from the Conqueror's time
 Hath never mingled blood with churl's before ?

Lydia. (R. h.) What frantic scheme has this man now to compass ?
 Nay, dear Sir Edgar, your modesty doth underrate your birth.

Mor. Not so. My father was a man of toil ;
 I mean real toil, such toil as makes the hand
 Uncouth to sight, coarse, hard to the touch ;
 There are none here who would have clasped that hand
 Save at election contests, when all fingers
 Grow marvellously pliant.

Lydia. How well this frankness becomes a noble mind !
 How great it is to rise by our desert from lowliness,
 And blush not at its memory !

Omnes. Most noble.

Lister. (L. c., to *Heartwell aside.*) I understand not this.

Heart. (L. h.) There's a deep meaning in it.

Mor. You would do honor, then, good friends, to him
Who by his own endeavor should win his way
To eminence and power?

Dean. Such men adorn their country.

Col. Their merit doth distance praise!

Lydia. They are earth's master spirits.

Mor. Then had you known one such, in his first years
Of effort, you had aided him; at least
Given him your hand — showed him respect?

Lydia. Respect most due.

Heart. Decidedly! Who doubts it?

Mor. You had been just, and had not plotted then
Against his peace, and baited with such smiles
As the heart loves to feed on, the dire poison
Of wanton, causeless scorn?

Lydia. Why ask them this, knowing that they would not?

Mor. But did such live, what should be their desert?

Earl. (c.) You trespass, sir, too much upon the time
Of this high company. Methinks 'twere well,
The notary should proceed.

Mor. I am indifferent.

Earl. Mean you to wed my daughter?

Mor. NO! (Turning upon him fiercely; all rise in surprise.)

Pier. Malignant viper, you shall dearly pay
The debt of this disgrace. (Exit NOTARY, c. D. L. H.)

Mor. Yet hold a while;

If you accuse me, grant me the same rights
That all accused enjoy. Hear my defence;
That over, I will bide whatever shape
Your anger wills to take.

Earl. Begone, sir; leave us while contempt stills wrath.

Mabel. I do beseech you, hear him; I am curious
To hear what sins of my commission urged
To deed so pitiful. If I had wronged —

Pier. Even then it was most pitiful revenge.

Lydia. But still consistent with his character.

Omnes. O, yes, yes!

Mor. Why, see how much your expectations mock your acts!
You sow the heart with bitterness, and marvel
That it bears kindless fruit. The slave's treatment
Is what you give man, and the angel's meekness
Is what you demand from him. 'Tis five years
Since this same Lady Mabel lured my soul
With such soft praises, and such winning looks
As only leave the words "I love" unsaid.
Twas not my vanity that thus construed
These signs of tenderness. The Lady Lydia
Noted their import; nay, with earnestness,

Not willing then our union, besought me
 To quit the castle,
 Avowed that Lady Mabel had confessed her love.
 Encouraged thus, I straightway sought the earl,
 Entreated his permission to be ranked
 As Lady Mabel's suitor, when it pleased her
 Smilingly to admit that she had toyed
 With me to wile away an idle hour.
 I hastened home ; in a few days the tale
 Of my crushed love was blazoned to the world,
 Blown, published, chorused,
 In the quick ear of scoffers ! This low churl,
 This foiled plebeian aspirant, supplied
 Mirth to a thousand jesters. What presumption
 In him to love thus ! What effrontery
 To have a heart ! Now, for once be men
 And women ; or, if you can, be human.
 Have you loved ever ? known what 'tis to stake
 Your heart's whole capital of blessedness
 Upon one die — the chance of love returned ;
 To lose the cast ; be beggared in your soul ;
 Then to be spurned, and made a public scorn
 By those who tempted to the fatal throw :
 Which drained your heart of riches ; and all this
 Because your birth was lowly ? Had you borne it ?

Earl. Enough, sir ! You have had your vengeance. Hence !

Mor. I have not sought for vengeance in this act.
 My life, my energies, my talents, all
 Did I task for the deed ! Such apparatus
 Was meant for nobler uses than belong
 To a mere private feud ; but I have fought
 A battle for high principles, and taught
Convention, when it dares to tread down *man*,
Man shall arise in turn and tread it down !
 As for this lady — she has never loved me,
 Nor have I lately sought to win her love ;
 Nor shall I ever seek again to win her love.
 I would not wreak on her such wretchedness
 As she caused me for pastime. I have done.
 My mission is fulfilled. (*Going up c. door.*)

Pier. You shall not quit this house until you answer
 For this indignity. (*Draws his sword.*)

(*MABEL rushes forward and arrests his arm with great agitation.*)

Mabel. Upon your life injure him not ;
 Put up your sword, I say. (*MORDAUNT regards her earnestly in
 centre.*)

Mor. He is not worthy of it. (*Exit, c. d. l. h.*)

TABLEAU. — *Quick drop.*

ACT V.

In the interval between the fourth and fifth acts the season changes from summer to autumn.

SCENE I.—*Library in Lynterne Castle, as before. PHYSICIAN and EARL discovered.*

Phy. Have you, my lord, of late received account
Of Lady Lydia's state?

Earl. No recent news; poor sister Lydia!
When first suspicion dawned that my child's grief
Was wearing health away, her aunt, o'ercome
By daily witness of such touching woe,
Grew pale almost to wanless.

From Venice, where my sister purposes
Some few months to stay, I anxiously wait letters.
But say! how fares it with my blessed one?
Tell me the worst.—Nay, pause a moment.—Now
I think I am man enough to hear you.

Phy. The mind is our chief enemy;—
And failing its alliance, all endeavor
Hastens the evil it would fain arrest.

Earl. O, tax your whole resources; could I find
The healing drug would save her, I would buy it,
Though beggared by the purchase.

Phy. Could we obliterate the past, efface
All memory of this wrong, whose double edge
Wounds both her love and pride, recall to life
Her hopes and her affections—

Earl. Cease, sir, to torture me; 'tis mockery
To name specifics out of human grasp.

Enter SERVANT announcing LADY LYDIA, who enters in travelling costume, C. D. L. H. Exit SERVANT, C. D. L.

Earl. (Advancing to meet her.) My sister! Dearest Lydia!
thou art changed.

Lydia. Speak not of me. Mabel, is she much altered, brother?

Earl. Alas! much altered, as yourself may see.

Enter MABEL, C. D. L. H., and attendant. They draw near MABEL. LYDIA keeping her eyes on the ground, and suddenly raising them as she faces her niece.

Lydia. (Trembling.) Ha! I need not support; let us embrace.
No, no, it is forbidden.

Mabel. Forbidden, sweetest kinswoman!

Lydia. (R. H.) By CONSCIENCE.

Let me tell you, conscience can bow
Wills tyrants cannot move—extort deep groans

(*PHYSICIAN wheels arm chair to MABEL in centre. MABEL seated and arranging herself in chair.*)

From men mute on the rack — and from the lips
Of guilty pride, which the flames' agony
Cannot distort or open, wring the tale
Of sin and degradation.

Earl. (l. h., to *PHYSICIAN*.) What can this mean ? I fear her
mind's disturbed.

Lydia. (Overhearing him.) True ! but not in your sense ; now,
listen to me.

I am my niece's murderer ! (*MABEL looks up.*)

Earl. Poor, poor unfortunate ! (*Compassionately.*)

Lydia. I did not drug her drink
With poison, nor at night with unsheathed blade
Startle her chamber's darkness ; but by arts
Born of infernal pride, I *poisoned hopes*
That outlive life in worth, and plunged my dart
Where it is mercy to stab mortally,
Such anguish follows where the wound is made.

Mabel. O, mercy ! mercy !
Did you deceive me *there* ?

Lydia. When he who shall be nameless was our guest,
I prompted him at once to ask your hand,
Assured him of your love, which I declared
Yourself had owned to me. With sinful wiles
I taught you to believe that he had dared
To ask you of your father as the hire
For future service. I awoke your wrath,
Moved you to show him scorn.

Mabel. Alas ! alas !

Lydia. With bitter raillery I told the tale
I had invented where I knew 'twould gain
Admission to his ear : the effect you know.

Mabel. Wake me ! I cannot bear this dream. O, wake me !
Will none of you have pity ?

Lydia. More remains. This letter will tell all. (*Gives letter.*)

MABEL takes the letter mechanically.)
Mabel, my niece, in deep remorse, in guilty agony,
I pray you to forgive me. (*Kneeling to MABEL.*)

Mabel. Hence ! your presence (*passionately.*)
Tortures my eyes, as have your deeds my heart !

Lydia. Niece ! child ! turn not away. I will be heard !
I loved thee ever. When I wronged thee most,
My sin was born of love. So high my aims
And hopes for thee, I could not brook thee wed,
Save where to every human excellence
Was added all the world accounts most noble.
And now these tears, this soft and plenteous dew,
Speak not an arid soil — a stony heart.
After my long and weary pilgrimage,
I clasp thy feet, a humbled penitent.

Mabel. I—I—O God, send tears!

Lydia. (With solemnity.) Ah, Mabel, think—
We both are dying women—
O, think that you

May need forgiveness too! (LYDIA kneels at MABEL's feet, and puts her arms round her neck.)

Mabel. You are forgiven. (Falteringly.)

Lydia. Bless thee! Death will be gentler now. Farewell!

(Kisses MABEL's hand, then advances to EARL.)

Brother! (Kneels.)

Earl. Yes, I will not add to other misery

That of repulsing penitence. Now go: You need rest, and must take it. (Exit LADY LYDIA, C. D. L. H.)

Earl. The tale so long discredited was true.

Mordaunt is wronged.

Mabel. (A pause.) I ruined and disgraced!

Earl. It shall be done. Avaunt, rebellious pride!

What though I grovelled at a peasant's foot

To save my dear one's life. Give me the letter.

(Takes letter from MABEL.)

Mabel. What mean you; for your air is strangely wild, And your frame trembles.

Earl. No, no; the strife is passed. O God! that we, Whom thy one breath can prostrate utterly, And sweep from earth our love's inheritance, Should dare to foster pride!

Mabel. (Starting to her feet.) You would see Mordaunt!

Earl. Yes, I will see him—supplicate his ear For this most sad mischance. My prayers and tears Will surely reach his heart. I'll bend my knee, And wear a look so meek, so lowly!

Mabel. Never!

Earl. O, yes; and he will pardon all the past.

Mabel. My path of desolation nears the grave; Yet can I turn my face to him once more, And look on him forgivingly. I know That he has been deceived, and I forgive him. He might have pardoned me; but he chose vengeance, And left the print of shame on my crushed heart; Yet wrung not from its depths one sigh of pain. My misery has been silent. O, dear father, Torture it not to speech!

Earl. Be calm, my child.

Mabel. Then go you not. Bow not your reverend head In unavailing shame, nor let him know What cause hath sped me hence. It shall not be. Your hand—a sudden weakness.

(MABEL sinks into a chair.)

Earl. Alas! emotion has o'ertaxed her strength!

Phy. I will attend her. Meanwhile, my dear lord, If your good purpose hold, seek Mordaunt straight.

Show him the letter. His mind, once convinced,
May prompt him to contrition, and such signs
Of penitent affection as shall win
Your daughter's heart to love of life again.

Earl. And yet I fear I go on a vain errand ;
For should he yield, to o'ercome *her* resolve
Will be a task yet harder.

Phy. We are in a strait
Of peril that admits no other hope.
I do conjure you go, and please you bid
Some one to attend to share with me my watch.

Earl. You counsel right, my friend. I go. Farewell.

Phy. Almighty aid be with you. (Exit EARL, C. D. L. H.)
Her eyelids open. She revives. Dear lady !

Mabel. Who speaks ? Where am I ?

Phy. 'Tis I, your faithful friend who watch by you.

Enter MAID SERVANT, C. D. L. H.

Mabel. Thanks, sir. Where is my father ? Call him hither !

Phy. Affairs of moment took him hence a while.

Mabel. Is he within ? He has not left the house ?

Phy. Soon to return.

Mabel. 'Twas strange he did not wait till I revived,
Nor staid to say farewell. (Weeps.) 'Tis not his wont
To quit me thus abruptly. I remember
He spoke of seeing Mordaunt. (SERVANT comes down.)
Heard you the earl's command ? Which way went he ?

Servant. Madam, I think to Richmond.

Mabel. (Rises.) Go straight and order that the fleetest steeds
Be harnessed instantly. Then wait a while.

My coming, in my chamber. (Exit MAID SERVANT, C. D. L.)
Check surprise ; I must depart at once and seek the earl.

Phy. 'Tis madness ! Think not that your shattered frame
Could undergo such trial of its strength !

Mabel. The feelings that inspire the deep resolve
Can grant the aid to execute. I must go.

Phy. You will forgive me if I countermand
Your order lately given. (Going, c. door.)

Mabel. Stay ! stay ! (Rushing to him. During this, catches at
back of chair for support.)
'Tis to preserve my father and myself
From scorn, from ignominy, from repulse,
I venture on this errand. O, just Heaven !
It will be thought we have devised some feint
To move this proud man's heart. In vain, in vain
My father will abase himself.
Do you deny me ? Think you that my life
Is not more perilled by your present act
Than by my own design ? What, not moved yet ?
Behold me take the suppliant's attitude. (Kneels.)

I do implore you in all humbleness
 To let me now depart. You will not yet? (Rises.)
 I claim my right of motion — trample on
 All counsel that prescribes subservience
 From soul to its poor vassal. I command
 You let me pass forthwith. You dare not brave me.

Phy. What supernatural wrath illumines her eye!
 She speaks sooth; the greater peril lies in opposition.
 Madam, your will has way.

Mabel. Thanks, thanks; *you are* my friend. In a short
 Space I shall expect you join me. Thanks! No help.

(*Exeunt, c. d. l. h.*)

SCENE II.—MORDAUNT'S House. *Sofa on l. h.; table and two chairs on r. h.*

Enter MORDAUNT, r. h.

Mor. I know not whence or wherefore there hath come
 This woman's weakness o'er my yielding soul!
 My deed was nobly done; then wherefore is't
 That I am not at peace? Why will the thought,
 Perchance, she may have loved me thus intrude?
 Why should I rack my soul with phantom fears
 Bred out of my weak pity?
 Can it be
 That I have sought revenge and called it justice?
 Beautiful stars! how once I gazed on ye!
 Ye almost seem to justify ambition;
 For ye, though throned in loftiest altitude,
 Have yet preëminence in purity!
 These fancies once were my realities.
 All Nature, with a meaning eloquence,
 Addressed me to encourage! That hath passed,
 Yet nature is the same in outward show;
 Each man makes his own world or unmakes it;
 And there he exiles whom no kingly edict,
 Nor voice of law, has banished.

Enter SERVANT, l. h. l. e.

Ser. The Earl of Lynterne. (*Enter the EARL.* *Exit SERVANT,*
Earl. Pardon, Sir Edgar, that I venture thus [l. e. l. h.]
 To break on your retirement; but my cause
 Is one that outruns all respect of forms.

Mor. A country's servant know's no privacy
 That bars consideration of her weal.
 I pray you sit, my lord.

Earl. My errand is not public. 'Tis not now
 The minister who claims your patient ear,

But a plain, sorrowing man, whose wounded heart
Your skill alone can heal. To be brief,
I am a father ; let that word tell all.

Mor. The father of a daughter ! Is it well
We should discourse of her ?

Earl. Tell me that you permit it. May I speak ?

Mor. Of her, my lord, or any other stranger,
If mention of a name delight your ear.

Earl. And you will bear with me — you will be patient ?

Mor. Why should I not ? What man is there so well
Can bear the verbal history of wrong
As he who hath it written on his heart ?
If you recite the past, you will not grave
The inward record deeper. And its trace
Endures, though you be silent.

Earl. O sir, repulse me not, for love of mercy.
Say that you retain some gentle thought,
Some tender recollection —

Mor. Of your daughter ? My lord, she has my pity.

Earl. What ! No more ?
Ah, sir, I watched Mabel many a time,
When accident has held you longer space
Than was your wont to tarry, quit her chair,
And by the hour watch in love's deep suspense,
Pale, fixed, and mute — a very statue ;
But when the tramp of thy approaching steed
Broke on her ear — for that love-quicken'd sense
Anticipated sight — she woke to life,
As though thy safety gave her leave to be,
Rushed forth to meet thee, but stopped bashfully
To wait thine entrance with downcast lids,
Which vainly tried to hide the lucid joy
Floating, like sunshine, in the orbs beneath.

Mor. What is your story's sequel ? What succeeds ?

Earl. You loved her once !

Mor. I did ; and since it pleases you, I speak.

It shall be to such purpose as to wring,
Even from your confession, that my act
Was one of justice, not of cruelty.
I loved her once ! Ay, she was then to me
The incorporated spirit of all good.
My soul's once science was to study her ;
Her eyes were all my light, her voice my music,
Her movements all I cared to know of grace.
Loved her ! 'Twas worship ! 'Twas idolatry !
And how was I repaid ? The meanest man
Who has nor wealth, nor talent, nor distinction,
Giving his *heart*, proffers the dearest gift
His Maker gave to him, and meriting,
Even when not accepted, gratitude !
I was not such a one ; in the world's van

I stood distinguished and preëminent !
 I gave my heart, my mind, unto your daughter,
 Of which she feigned acceptance, not by words,
 But by confession far more eloquent.

I pressed the love she favored ; she repulsed it !
 She trampled on it ! It was glowing fire ;
 She trod it into ashes !

Earl. It was not so ; but hear me.

Mor. It is too late.

Earl. (Rises.) I do implore you, then, to read this letter.

(MORDAUNT takes letter, reads, and speaks.)

Mor. If this be true, it does pronounce me guilty ;
 Yet may this not turn out a fine device ?

(MABEL enters and rushes to the EARL, 1 E. L.)

Mabel. My father !

Earl. My child ! Read there the answer to your doubt.

Mor. 'Tis evidence that stabs, while it convicts.

Why knew I not this sooner ?

O Mabel, how I've wronged thee ! (Kneels to her.)

Mabel. What words are these ? I came here to forbid
 Vain supplication to a haughty heart,
 And lo ! I find one meek and penitent.
 And dost thou love me, Mordaunt ?

Mor. Love thee, Mabel !

My care-worn heart revives at sight of thee,
 And hoards the life 'twas weariness to keep.
 How now ! thou tremblest, sweet !

Mabel. Love ! aid me to my chair ;
 My strength is failing fast ; I am as one
 Who has striven hard to distance grief, and gained
 The goal before her, my strength but sufficing
 To win the triumph. Mordaunt, I shall die
 With thy love for my chaplet, and in peace !

Mor. And thou wilt live in peace for many years !
 What demon gives my fear-struck heart the lie !

Mabel. I've much to say, and but brief time to speak it.
 Thou knowest now I love thee ; but thou canst not,
 Thou canst not tell how deeply. That our lips
 Should so belie our hearts ! Couldst thou read mine —

Mor. Or thou read mine ; the thoughts of agony
 Remorse sears on it with a brand of fire !

Mabel. O, couldst thou know how often in my walks
 My soul drank gladness from the thought that thou
 Wouldst share them with me, and the beautiful
 Grow brighter as thy voice interpreted
 Its hidden loveliness ; and our fireside !
 How I should greet thee from the stormy war
 Of public conflict, kneel beside thy chair,
 And cause thee bend thine eyes on mine, until
 Thy brow expanded, and thy lips confessed
 The blessedness of home !

Mor. Home, sayest thou ? *Home !*

Home ! That means *Grave*.

Mabel. My fate is gentler, love,
Than I had dared to hope. I shall not *live*
Encircled by thine arms ; but I may die so.

Mor. I cannot bear it ; O, I cannot bear it.

Fool ! fool ! Not to know the vengeance of forgiveness !

Earl. You see, sir, that the wound is deep enough.

Mabel. Nay, speak not harshly ; for in noble minds
Error is suffering, and we should soothe
The breast that bears its punishment within.
Tell him that you forgive him. Do not pause.
Think not thy affluent affection now,
That hitherto outran my need in granting —
Dimness floats before me. While I yet
Can hear your voice, tell me that you forgive him.

(*MABEL has now raised herself, and stands erect.*)

Earl. I do, I do !

Mabel. Now take him to your arms,
And call him son. (*She staggers to EDGAR.*)

Earl. I do, I do ! My son, my son !

Mor. My father !

Mabel. I am happy — very, very happy ! (*Dies.*)

MORDAUNT.

EARL.

MABEL.

R. H

CENTRE.

L. H.

CURTAIN.

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